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THE BLACK BOOK
OF POLISH JEWRY

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THE BLACK BOOK OF POLISH JEWRY

*An Account of the Martyrdom of Polish Jewry
Under the Nazi Occupation*

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

THIS BOOK, which contains a detailed account of the plight of the Jews in Poland from the beginning of the German invasion to recent days, is presented to the reader at the most tragic moment in the history of the Jewish people, when perhaps the process of the extermination of Polish Jewry reaches its horrifying peak. No other people in enslaved Europe has suffered so much spiritual and material loss, has undergone so much degradation and sacrificed so much innocent blood, as have the Jews in Poland. But notwithstanding the enormity of the tragedy public opinion in the democratic countries is all too unaware of the inferno in which hundreds of thousands of Jews perished under the blows of their barbaric oppressors, or of the destruction of the priceless material and spiritual wealth which Polish Jewry had accumulated throughout the centuries. This first complete account of the most monstrous persecution in human history is intended to fill the glaring gap in contemporary war literature which has not yet told the detailed story of one of the greatest martyrologies of modern times.

The Black Book of Polish Jewry has been prepared on the principle that the unvarnished truth, without exaggeration and without the trimmings of propaganda, speaks for itself. And this truth, as reflected in the accounts of eyewitnesses, in official reports, in affidavits of persons who succeeded in escaping from occupied Poland, and even in the Nazis' own statements and photographs, presents so overwhelming and powerful an indictment of Hitler's savage and bestial rule, that any additional arraignment would be superfluous.

In presenting the plight of the Jews under the Nazi yoke we have restricted ourselves to the area of Poland occupied by the Germans, although the martyrdom of Jewry spreads over all enslaved Europe. Poland, home of the largest Jewish population in Europe, was chosen by Hitler as the central slaughter-house for all Jews driven there from other countries and as the greatest concentration camp for Jews. In Poland Hitler established the arena where the doomed Jews were subjected to the most cruel manifestations of his anti-Semitic, racial theories and where the sadistic instincts of the wild Nazi mob were let loose without restraint. As the facts show, Poland was selected as the country where the promise of the extinction of European Jewry should be fulfilled.

The substance of the first part of this book consists of a chronological, documentary text presenting the course of events, of the responsible affidavits of eyewitnesses, of official reports and statements, of excerpts from original letters which reached this country or neutral countries in Europe, of quotations from the Nazi press, and of photographs smuggled out of Poland, and brought to this country or reproduced in the Nazi press. This material has been gathered from many sources, such as the publications of the Office of War Information, Polish Government archives in London, the Polish Information Center in New York, the "Poland Fights" committee, the Institute for Jewish Affairs of the American and World Jewish Congress; the Research Institute on Peace and Postwar Problems of the American Jewish Committee and others.

The second part of the book contains a record of the material and spiritual wealth of Polish Jewry which was destroyed by the Nazis. A selected group of reliable Polish-Jewish experts, specialists in the various fields described, have combined to present to the reader who may not be informed of the achievements of Polish Jewry, the cultural and economic structure which the Nazis have laid waste. The chapters in this section describe not only the process of destruction but also what was destroyed. The destruction of Polish Jews does not mean only the loss of human lives. The history of this martyrdom does not end with the physical annihilation of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children. It means the devastation of a vast and highly developed culture and social organization, of commerce, industry, artisanship, of religious and educational institutions, of literature and arts, of that part of European civilization which was built up by the outstanding contributions of Polish Jewry. This Jewry, with its accomplishments throughout the centuries, with its savants, thinkers, reformers, social leaders, writers, artists, with so many distinguished personalities in various creative fields, has written a glorious chapter in mankind's book of the history of culture and democracy. Only when a comprehensive view is presented of the wealth that has been destroyed can the scope of the tragedy be completely reflected.

In the nations of the world such a comprehensive view, embracing all data, documents and reports pertaining to the entire community, are usually made by governments with well-equipped departments and archives to collect the necessary material. But the Jewish nation in general—and Polish Jewry in particular—are not provided with such facilities or with a central governing body with rich means at its disposal. Therefore the task of presenting the story of the destruction of

Polish Jewry in this war was extraordinarily difficult under present conditions. But the need for such a publication and the desire for its appearance on the part of the Polish Jews living in this country under the blessed sky of freedom were so strong that the American Federation for Polish Jews and the Association of Jewish Refugees and Immigrants from Poland undertook the task.

We owe a particular debt of gratitude to the Institute for Jewish Affairs for its assistance in checking up statistical data and for providing us with necessary documents as well as to the Research Institute on Peace and Postwar Problems of the American Jewish Committee, the Polish Information Center and the Polish Labor Group, "Poland Fights," which made the contents of their archives available to us.

In submitting this book to the hands of the reading public we believe that the duty of informing the world of the tragedy of Polish Jewry is partially fulfilled. Partially only, for at this moment it is not yet possible to penetrate to the last detail of the greatest martyrdom in human history. The full truth will be known in its entire horror only when the victorious forces of Democracy will have crushed the satanic edifice of Hitlerism.

JACOB APENSZLAK,
New York, October, 1943.

A NOTE ON THE SOURCES

The preparation of a volume such as this involves two main problems: (1) Securing the complete material pertaining to the subject, and (2) Selecting the material which stands the test of authenticity.

It is obvious that under present conditions innumerable difficulties presented themselves. The reasons are manifold. The Nazis, while widely publicizing their determination to exterminate the Jewish people, are careful to withhold any information concerning the methods by which their program is being carried out. Moreover it is one of the lines of Nazi policy not to deny charges against them made by Jews, or even by non-Jews if they are concerned with Jewish matters. This is in complete accord with the Nazi racial concept that an *Uebermensch*, a superman, cannot be hurt by an *Untermensch*, an inferior man. However, it would be erroneous to assume that the Nazi or Nazi-controlled press ignore Jewish items. In addition to the whole of the anti-Jewish legislation promulgated in the official *Verordnungsblatt* and to various items referring to changes in Jewish property registered in the *General-Anzeiger* from time to time, in a rather casual way, the Nazi-controlled newspapers carry Jewish news. For two years there was a Jewish paper in Poland, *Gazeta Żydowska*, which, though subjected to strict censorship, contains treasures of valuable information.

In addition to these official, or at least Nazi-controlled sources, there are anti-Nazi sources in Poland itself, either in the form of underground newspapers or reports reaching free countries from Poland. In this latter respect, some of the most important information is contained in the depositions made by refugees who managed to escape from Poland to Palestine via Wilno. The number of these reports, however, steadily decreased; they are of unequal value, and it has been only by checking the depositions against the facts emanating from various sources that a fair picture of the situation has been arrived at.

The third source is the information contained in the neutral press and coming from neutral observers. In this respect, Swiss and Swedish correspondents' reports are most enlightening. Although neutral correspondents have great difficulties in making their way back of the scenes in Nazi-occupied countries, such reports have come through and they are of unquestionable value. Sometimes, too, even Axis sympathizers, such as Italians and Hungarians visiting Poland at the invitation

of the Nazis, make reports which, if properly read, produce an impression entirely opposite from the one intended.

The fourth source of information is the immense machinery created by the Polish Government in Exile and its agencies. Here, too, belong the daily bulletins of the P. T. A. (Polish Telegraphic Agency), the Fortnightly Review of the Ministry of Information, originally published in French, later in English; the Polish White and Black Books; the numerous Polish magazines; and last, but not least, the local Polish press which has close connections with the Polish Government and its information agencies. It is through the channels of the Polish Government information agencies that material smuggled out of Poland reaches this country and is made available to the researcher.

The fifth and last source is the Jewish one. Through various channels — Geneva, Slovakia, Hungary, Constantinople — wherever representatives of Jewish news agencies or newspaper organizations are, energetic efforts are made to secure as much information as possible. The time has not yet come to specify these sources in detail, but a word of thanks and admiration should be expressed here to all of those who, at the very risk of their lives, keep the world informed of the crimes of the Germans.

This short survey serves, above all, to reveal the scope of our knowledge. The fact that our knowledge is incomplete cannot influence our judgment on the authenticity of the information received. Out of an intimate knowledge of conditions in Poland and of the Nazi line of conduct, every new item received has been approached critically and checked up in the light of all available information. We believe that the picture presented here will serve as a moving record of the tragedy of Polish Jewry.

JACOB ROBINSON,
Director, Institute of Jewish Affairs.

INTRODUCTION

By DR. IGNACY SCHWARZBART

Member of the National Council of the Polish Republic

On my table as I write these lines are a score of photographs of the Polish Ghettos. Children—more like tormented wraiths. Heaps of naked corpses piled for burial in a common grave. The hunger-swollen body of a child. Gangster Gestapo men looking on cynically at a mass burial. Bodies, covered with rags, huddled against a Ghetto wall. A Jewish woman lying unconscious on the ground, and nearby a screaming child with an expression of indescribable pain on its contorted face.

I examine a statistical table—the Jewish mortality in Poland from January, 1941 to September, 1941. The line of the graph leaps angrily upward.

An inferno! And yet this was before we received the horrifying reports of mass-slaughters, of the extermination of hundreds of thousands of children, women and men; before the gas-chambers of Treblinka and Belzec and the man-hunts on the streets of the Ghettos.

The *Black Book of Polish Jewry* is the first full account of the tragedy of the Jews of Poland—a tragedy unique in its horror and scope. The pages of this book constitute a powerful accusation against the German nation. This book is an indictment thrown on the bench of the Court which will one day sit in judgment over the crimes committed by a nation of 80,000,000 people. This book asks in a loud voice for the punishment of the culprits and for satisfaction from the United Nations.

Persecutions, murders, deportations, pogroms, tortures, annihilation; a people flung to the lowest level of degradation and humiliation; devastation of the spiritual wealth accumulated through the enthusiastic labor of centuries. A "danse macabre" of the Satanic forces let loose by beasts who wear a human form. This is our Bill of Particulars; this is the background of our accusation.

Here is a Dante's Inferno, a nightmare of suffering and desperation; pain frozen on the faces of mothers and innocent children. The blood of these martyrs demands retaliation for the crimes committed by a nation which, by the will of Adolf Hitler, is the instrument of suffering and torture and death for millions of helpless victims.

Here in this book are their documents and legal decrees—these *Herrenvolk* inflated with pride and bathing in blood; this chosen nation which transformed Europe into a vast prison, a vast concentration camp. This is the book of the German "New Order."

This is the record of the martyrology of the Jews, concerning which the Polish Government said: "Monstrous and terrible was the treatment of the Poles in general, but the treatment of the Jews was in many cases even more horrible."

Mass-murder, robbery, arson, torture, annihilation of human beings unprecedented in human history. People buried alive in synagogues, in their homes, shot in the streets, hunted like dogs. The Germans and their henchmen attacking the Jews like mad beasts, pillaging homes and stores, looting their belongings, driving children, men and women through the blood-stained corridors of Treblinka to the gas-chambers waiting for them.

And this was only one corridor in the Jewish labyrinth in Europe.

Different pictures unroll before our eyes in this nightmarish film of reality. We find in this book descriptions of the confiscation of Jewish wealth and of the appropriation by the Germans of Jewish stores and business undertakings. We see the process of the outlawing of Polish Jewry; scenes of compulsory labor; pictures of the tragic exodus of Jews hounded from villages and towns; descriptions of "life" in the Lublin Reservation and in the Ghettos. In one of the photographs we see the main hall in the building of the Jewish Community in Warsaw; on the wall the portraits of venerable rabbis, and below at a table the Gestapo men count the money brought by the Jews as ransom so that a Ghetto would not be established. The "Herrenvolk" accepted the money and established the Ghetto. In another photograph you see the signs—"Epidemic Area"—drawn across the Warsaw streets in the Jewish section; you see the walls separating the Ghetto from the town, and above the gate of the House of God in Bydgoszcz an inscription, "This town is Judenrein." And the macabre parade of the German "New Order" goes on: a tram-car rolling inside the Warsaw Ghetto with a Star of David on its front.

Each page of the book opens up a pit of humiliation and degradation: the herding of men like cattle; misery and suffering. And on the reverse side of the picture—cynicism, vileness, crime, treachery, bestiality.

But Polish Jewry was worthy of its glorious name. It did not lie passive under the blows of its tormentors. It struck back with an armed resistance the story of which is a saga of Jewish heroism.

In addition to the photographs that lie before me, there are several copies of the newspapers printed by the Polish Underground in February, April and May of this year. They have just reached me in London. In their columns are the living voices of those who saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears the bursts of gunfire from the rifles in the hands of Jewish fighters in the Ghetto and the answering roar of German cannons: saw the sky glow red in the reflection of the fires that swept the Warsaw Ghetto: saw the procession of trainloads of hundreds and thousands of Jews being taken to slaughter; saw the soldiers of the German *Herrenvolk*, grins on their faces, shoot down innocent women and children.

A report printed in a Warsaw Underground paper dated May 6, 1943, written by the delegate to the Polish Underground of the Polish Government in Exile tells of the last struggle of the Warsaw Ghetto which began in the morning hours of April 19.

It is generally supposed that this battle was the first evidence of Jewish armed resistance. That is not the case. There had been encounters with the Germans in January, 1943, too.

The deep impression which the Jewish armed resistance made on the Polish masses can be seen from the stirring Proclamation of the Central Organization of Polish workers. It is dated Warsaw, April, 1943:

"The inhabitants of the Warsaw Ghetto are resisting the Germans who are attempting to annihilate the remnants of Polish Jewry. These Jewish workers—Polish citizens of Jewish nationality—are the very marrow and soul of the Jewish fighting detachments who have raised an armed resistance to the Hitlerite criminals. To these workers of Jewish nationality who, facing unavoidable death, have decided to die fighting rather than to surrender passively, we send our brotherly greetings and our promise that their deeds will be remembered and will become part of the immortal legends of Fighting Poland."

It may be asked why the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto did not put up armed resistance before January, 1943. The answer is that before then they had no weapons. When they did get weapons in their hands they began to fight.

The Germans have murdered at least one fifth, maybe one quarter, of the population of the Jewish nation. This loss refers only to the civilian population, not to military casualties which are the normal, natural consequence of warfare. Our military losses will undoubtedly be relatively equal to the losses sustained by other nations. But the losses of Jewry among the civilian population are altogether exceptional.

The problems we are confronted with now are first; how to save the remnants of Polish Jewry so that there will be at least a nucleus for the great task of regeneration, and second; how to rehabilitate the remaining Polish Jews so that they might undertake their historic responsibility.

Some day the war will come to an end. The nations will return to their normal labors. The enslaved nations will again be free. The Polish Jews who will still be alive will wander like ghosts among their dead, while a new life arises around them. Perhaps these remnants of Polish Jewry will be able to find in themselves the forces to create a new life, just as so many times in our history we have risen from devastation and ruin to contribute our creativeness to the world. Some day, when the war is over, the Germans will stand before the tribunal of the United Nations. When that day comes, this *Black Book of Polish Jewry* will be at the judges' table as Exhibit A in the most damning accusation ever voiced against any nation.

Will justice be done? Will the history of Articles 227-229 of the Versailles Treaty be repeated? Besides delivering the verdict of humanity against the criminals, the tribunal of the United Nations will have the task of deciding the future of the peoples who fought so heroically against history's most monstrous evildoers. Among these people are the Polish Jews. We do not ask for pity now, nor will we ask for pity after the war. We will demand justice for the Jews, as other nations will demand justice for themselves. We will demand our right to live, as one of the oldest—and not the least—among the nations which have made significant contributions to civilization.

If after this war, notwithstanding our unprecedented sacrifices and losses, our rights as citizens and our right to a national life are not realized and guaranteed, it will mean that still another crime has been committed against the Jewish people.

May this *Black Book of Polish Jewry* serve to awaken the hearts and conscience of the nations of the world.

THE BLACK BOOK OF POLISH JEWRY

CHAPTER ONE

BLITZPOGROM

WHEN THE HITLERITE HORDES STRUCK at Poland in September, 1939, the three-and-a-quarter million Jews of that country knew that what was in store for them was vastly more than merely the sufferings and privations incidental to war. For six years they had known of the tragedy and the humiliation and destruction of German Jewry and they knew of the ruthless application of the Nazi racial slogans. They had seen the streams of Jews from Germany and the thousands of Polish-Jewish residents of Germany thrown across the Polish frontier. They had seen the operation of Hitlerism in peace time, and they felt in war time it would be infinitely more ruthless.

The war had now come, with the deafening roar of clouds of Stukas, the piercing shrieks of bombs and the black and purple curtains of fire around the horizon. Dive bombers struck at towns and villages, and refugees fleeing along the highways of the countryside were machine-gunned. This was the ghastly and horrifying war of surprise—the Blitzkrieg—directed against the entire population of Poland.

But for the Jews in Poland there was something more horrible in prospect, something more cruel than the mere cold process of degradation as practiced against the Jews in Germany. It was as novel a device as the Blitzkrieg, the special technique employed by Hitler for the first time in the Polish campaign—it was the Blitzpogrom.

This bloody operation reached its peak after only three years of Nazi occupation of Poland in the mass slaughter of the Ghetto population. But in its opening stages it was performed with the first onrush of the German armies into the territories of Poland.

The testimony given by Jewish refugees from Poland, first in Lithuania, then in France, Palestine and the United States, all reveals the same pattern in the German conduct towards the Jewish population from the start of the invasion to the capitulation of Warsaw on September 29, 1939.

When the invasion began, German forces poured into Poland from the north, the west and the southwest. In the west and southwest parts of Poland lay the cities of Lodz, Czestochowa, Kalisz and many smaller towns with large Jewish populations. Lodz, the second largest city in Poland, had a Jewish population of about 220,000; Kalisz had about 30,000; Czestochowa about 25,000. In the southern part of Poland, in Krakow, the ancient capital of Poland, the Jewish population was 65,000, while in the southwestern part, the mining district and in Silesia, there lived more than 100,000 Jews in the large industrial centers such as Katowice, Bendzin, Sosnowiec, Bielsko and others.

SPECIAL DEVICE AGAINST JEWS

Even before the entire Polish territory was conquered and the organization of the regime with regard to the Jewish population was effected on the basis of special legislation much more stringent than the German anti-Jewish laws, the conduct of the Germans already indicated their special Jewish policy in Poland. That policy was applied in each locality as soon as it was occupied: its purpose was to achieve the total extermination of the Jews. Their device, not yet incorporated in any written decree, was obvious in every act of the military administration and of the Gestapo; it was, so to speak, carried by every soldier in his knapsack.

The device consisted of isolating the Jews from the rest of the population by segregation, of "softening" them by breaking down their moral resistance, weakening them physically by terror, hard labor, undernourishment, unhygienic conditions, lack of medical attention and by expropriating their wealth.

FIRST STEPS: WIERUSZOW, CZESTOCHOWA, BIELSKO

The march of the German armies into Poland began on September 1, 1939. In their path lay many localities whose population included large numbers of Jews. In the very first days of the invasion they subjected the Jews to almost identical patterns of persecution, as is shown by the testimony of Jews who escaped from Poland to Lithuania. Thus we

read in an affidavit made before a representative of the World Jewish Congress in Wilno, concerning the small town of Wieruszow which was occupied on September 2: "The Germans treated the Jews with their customary brutality, they cut off the beards of the Jews, they plundered Jewish stores and sent eighty Jews to the concentration camp in Krakow and kept them there for six weeks. Among those sent to the concentration camp was the rabbi of Wieruszow, Moshe Kleiger. But all these were trifles compared to the slaughter of twenty Jews. The day the Germans marched into the town, they led twenty Jews into the market place and shot them. Among the victims were the following prominent persons: Isaac Lewi, 61 years old, Israel Lewi, 65, Moshe Mozes, Abraham Lefkowitz, Usiel Baumatz, Jacob Lewi, and Abraham Seiderman. Liebe Lewi, the daughter of Israel Lewi, ran over to her father to bid him farewell. The German brutes ordered her to open her mouth for this impudence, fired a bullet into it and she fell dead on the spot."

Czestochowa, near the Polish-German frontier, was occupied on September 3. Immediately, upon their arrival, the Germans started a hunt for the Jews, beating them and killing them on the streets and looting their homes. The pogrom lasted for several days, during which 180 Jews were killed.

On the same day the Germans also occupied the industrial town of Bielsko in Silesia. Here the pogrom was obviously part of a deliberate plan. Many Jews having fled the town with the beginning of the invasion, only 2,000 remained. These were all rounded up on the first day and herded into the courtyard of the local Talmud Torah where they were cruelly beaten. Some were hung up by their hands and left in this position for several hours. Boiling water was poured over many of them. For seven days the Jews were kept in this improvised concentration camp during which time they were made to do hard labor outside the camp. While they worked they were beaten and humiliated by their overseers, forced to strike one another and subjected to the most inhuman torture. The nozzles of rubber-pipes would be inserted into the mouths of the victims and water pumped into them until their stomachs swelled. At other times, they would be suspended by ropes until they were near death, and then taken down.

During the seven-day period in which the Jews were kept in the concentration camp, their stores and homes were looted by the German soldiers. Two weeks after their arrival the Germans burned all Jewish synagogues, schools and public institutions and finally drove the Jews

out of town in the direction of Lublin. Thus the complete "dejudaization" of Bielsko was achieved in conformity with the goal of making Silesia "Judenrein."

THE PROCESS OF "DEJUDAIZATION"

The same process of "dejudaization" was performed during the first days of invasion in other western towns of Poland such as Bydgoszcz (Pomorze), Torun, Grudziadz, Krolewska Huta. Baker Beall, the English journalist who was a resident of Bydgoszcz, writes in her book *The German Invasion of Poland*:

"The synagogue in Bydgoszcz was the first building to be destroyed and the maltreatment of Jews began at once. On one Monday soon after the occupation, sixty people were shot, of whom the greatest part were said to be Jews. In the small neighboring towns the Jews, so I heard, were completely exterminated, men, women and children being shot. I asked a German lady if this was true, and she said it was, and that in one of those towns there lived two old ladies, educated German Jewesses, who had been born and lived there all their lives; she said they were really nice women and had been on the friendliest terms with her parents and those poor old women had been murdered with the rest of the Jews in the town." *The Black Book of Poland* reports that 5,000 men, women and children were shut up in one of the stables which had been set aside as latrines.

On September 4, 1939, the Germans occupied Kalisz in the western part of Poland, a city with a Jewish population of 30,000. According to an affidavit made by a refugee Jew before a representative of the World Jewish Congress in Wilno, as soon as the Germans entered Kalisz they forced their way into the Jewish Home for the Aged and under threat of death drove the inmates outside and compelled them to stand for hours with their hands raised above their heads. Finally they released them. The next day they arrested the entire male population of the town, but released the Poles and detained the Jews. They also arrested those Jews who had fled and now returned. Several hundreds were put in jail where they were deprived of food and tortured. Finally half of them were released and the others sent to a concentration camp.

The rest of the Jews in the town were made to wear the yellow badge, to clean the latrines in the barracks with their bare hands, and were driven off the bread lines. They were even made to smear one another's faces with excrement. One young Jew, Tadeusz Gutner, on whom the Germans found a registration card of a Belgian University,

was accused of being an English spy and was made to crawl on his stomach for a mile while a truck full of German soldiers followed him.

One day the Germans herded together all Jewish occupants of several houses, 17, 19 and 21 Ciasna Street, and from ten in the morning to five in the afternoon compelled them to run around, crawl and bark like dogs. Similar cruelty and degradation was practiced by the Germans on Jews performing compulsory labor. The great synagogue of Kalisz was transformed into a prison camp. The Holy Scrolls were torn and the Germans made a bonfire of them and forced the Jews to jump over the fire. During the months of September and October the Jews of Kalisz were robbed of all their possessions and were deprived of all means of livelihood. Finally, when all the preliminary stages had been performed, the Germans completed the Blitzpogrom and made Kalisz, now incorporated in the Reich, *Judenrein*.

One day in November the streets were surrounded by cordons of military police. They gave the Jews ten minutes in which to leave their houses. No distinction was made as to age and sex, and the evicted Jews were not permitted to take any of their belongings with them. On the streets they were beaten and driven to several buildings, including commercial halls and churches, where they were herded—12,000 in all—and kept there for two weeks under the most appalling conditions. Women gave birth to children on the bare floors; many died of disease and undernourishment; all were constantly beaten. Then they were sent away in groups in sealed cars in the direction of the Lublin Reservation. Families were separated and lost on the way. Thus Kalisz was finally "dejudaised."

TYPICAL CASES OF BLITZPOGROM: ALEKSANDROW, PIOTRKOW,
ZGIERZ, WLOCLAWEK, MIBLEC

A typical case of a Blitzpogrom took place in Aleksandrow, near Lodz. The details are given in the testimony of Gedaliah F. of that town:

"The Germans occupied the town; they set fire to the synagogue in Aleksandrow on September 7; this fire was started with the aid of the Poles. They also pulled down the prayer house of the Aleksandrow rabbi and sold the lumber for firewood.

"On entering the town, the Germans arrested sixty Jews and shut them up in a building which served as place of detention. On September 14, twenty-five of the arrested Jews were taken out and marched off to the courtyard of the town-hall where they were tied to one another

and brutally beaten. Then they were all taken to the cemetery and shot to death. The rest were then brought from the improvised concentration camp to bury the twenty-five dead and after they had performed that task they were beaten.

"Among those shot were the seventy-year old Joshua Zarnowski and the only two sons of the local *shochet*, Weinberg. The Germans demanded of the latter that he sign a statement to the effect that his sons had died of natural causes, threatening him with death if he refused. Weinberg refused to sign the statement, saying that after the death of his two sons he did not fear death for himself.

"On September 16 the Germans took another sixteen people from the concentration camp, marched them off to the outskirts of the town and there shot them dead. Among them were Israel Joshua Wasserman, Sawicki and Leib Szmulewicz.

"The survivors in the concentration camp were subjected to all kinds of torture. They were made to use the building as a latrine which caused an unbearable stench.

"When cutting off the beards of the Jews, the Germans would wound their faces severely, and, to make their appearance more ridiculous, would cut off only one-half of the beard.

"The Germans robbed the Jews of their merchandise, their money and jewelry and finally drove them out of their homes."

Piotrkow, an administrative center in Western Poland and with a Jewish population of 17,000, is in the territory which took the full first shock of the Blitzpogrom, and in which the entire pattern of discrimination, humiliation, torture, robbery and extermination was applied even before the whole of Poland was conquered. Piotrkow was also the scene of the first Ghetto "test." It was occupied on September 5, 1939, on the fifth day of the invasion. The same procedure the Germans had applied to the Jews in the towns previously occupied were carried out here: the herding of the Jewish population, forced labor, imprisonment in concentration camps, looting of Jewish stores, burning of synagogues and destruction of the Holy Scrolls and the tentative establishment of the Ghetto. At first this was simply a restricted area to which the Jews were ordered to confine themselves. This was in October, 1939, but in February, 1940, the restricted area was "legally" converted into a complete Ghetto with everything the word implies.

The Nazi "racial" theory presented no obstacle to the behavior of the German soldiers towards the Jews, not even the Nuremberg laws which prohibited sexual relations with Jewesses. Jezechiel F. of Grodz-

isk Mazowiecki states in his affidavit before a representative of the World Jewish Congress in Wilno:

"At night the Germans would force their way into Jewish homes and rape women and girls. The other members of the household would be locked up in another room. Some of the girls, those of the more educated type, would be taken by the Germans to their barracks where they were raped and killed."

The town of Zgierz, near Lodz, was a large industrial center, with a Jewish population of 4,600. Here, in addition to the usual burning of synagogues, shootings, terror and robbery, the Germans inflicted a particularly cynical pattern of humiliation.

Some details of the atrocities in Zgierz are reported by Hannah Rubin, Asher Weinberger, Zachariah Pruski and Isaiah Cincinnatus, residents of that town:

"The Germans occupied Zgierz on September 7, 1939. On entering the town, they arrested 500 Jews and locked them up in a Catholic church where they were kept for 48 hours, for the most part of the time standing in two rows facing each other.

"The Nazis frequently set fire to Jews' beards or cut off half of the beard in order to produce a ludicrous effect.

"They looted the stores and many warehouses and factories. The factories were all requisitioned and placed under the control of Germans.

"A great number of Jews were driven out of their homes on five minutes' notice and were not permitted to take any of their possessions with them.

"Besides all this, the Germans imposed on the Jews large levies of money which had to be paid in full regardless of the fact that the well-to-do manufacturers and business people had fled the town and those who were left were utterly ruined.

"Jews were forbidden to congregate for religious worship, and even Jews praying individually were not spared when caught by the Germans who drove them through the town wrapped in their praying shawls. The Germans destroyed the synagogue and the prayer-house by setting fire to them and then forced Rabbi Cohen to sign a statement declaring that the houses of worship had been burned by the Jews themselves.

"The remaining Jews were subjected to much humiliation and ill-treatment while they performed forced labor and on other occasions. They were beaten before work, during work, and after work, and many died as a result. A man by the name of Bialyostocki, as a result of the brutal beatings he received, became insane and shortly afterwards died.

"The brutality of the Germans towards the Jews became more pronounced after the fall of Warsaw. Almost every day, especially on Sundays, about 200 Jews were herded together and forced to gallop through the streets, stop at every corner and lie down and shout: We Jews are swine! Such exercises would usually last from 8 a.m. till 2 p.m. The member of the Jewish Community Council, Kompel, was made to crawl on the ground and do all sorts of exercises.

"Often the Germans would force their way into Jewish houses on streets from which Jews had not yet been expelled and rob them of their few remaining possessions, brutally beating the people of the houses, not sparing even the women.

"Seven Jews in Zgierz were shot to death by the Germans on various pretexts.

Another illustration of German methods during the first days of the invasion is the story of the Jewish community of Wloclawek. Wloclawek had a Jewish population of 20,000 which formed a substantial proportion of the general population of the town and exerted a considerable influence in local affairs. The Wloclawek Jewish community was one of the finest in Poland for its loyalty to Jewish tradition and Jewish culture. A detailed account of the destruction of this Jewish community was given by Aaron F. and Aaron J.

"The Germans occupied the town on September 14. They immediately began plundering Jewish stores, and within the first few days of their entry, the Jews had no merchandise left to sell. Besides they were brutality driven from the bread lines and forced to go without food. At the same time the German authorities issued decrees intended to deprive the Jews of the most elementary rights and to reduce them to the level of cattle. Jews were forbidden to walk on the sidewalks and had to walk in the middle of the street. To distinguish the Jews from the Poles, all Jews, regardless of their sex, from the age of twelve years up, were compelled to wear yellow badges.

"Hundreds of Jews were taken to forced labor every day. At work they were beaten mercilessly, tortured and humiliated. They were forced to clean the latrines with their bare hands and were made to wash used contraceptives. They had to march off to forced labor in military formation. For failure to goose-step properly and for walking out of step they were brutally beaten. One Jew, Altschul, was shot to death for violating the rules as to goose-stepping.

"Synagogues and prayer-houses were closed by the German authorities during the first week of the occupation, so that Jews were forced to hold services in secret in private homes. The Germans suspected this

was going on and on the eve of the Day of Atonement went searching for Jewish worshippers. On Piekarska Street they found several improvised prayer-houses filled with Jews in their praying-shawls and dragged them to the barracks in their ritual garb. They forced the Jews to sweep the floors of the barracks with their praying shawls, while they took photographs of them and jeered at the Jewish religion.

"On the same night, September 22, German Storm-troopers broke into Jewish homes on Lengska Street, dragged men and women out of their beds half-naked, and marched them off to a Polish school which served as a barracks for the Germans. Several Jews who did not walk as fast as the German persecutors wanted them to, were shot on the spot and the remaining Jews were made to bury them near the windows of Jewish houses while the victims were still suffering their death agonies. Those killed were Dembinsky, Dischel and Bernholz. In the barracks the Jews were made to stand all night long until ten-o'clock the following morning with their hands raised above their heads.

"On the day following the Day of Atonement, September 24, the Germans mined the prayer-houses of Wloclawek, the large synagogue on Krolewska Street, and the synagogue on Zabia Street and set them on fire, having first torn down the cupolas and the Stars of David over them. The fires burned for a day and a night while German officers stood guard to prevent anyone from trying to extinguish the flames. The conflagration was filmed by the Germans.

"Finally, the Germans arrested twenty-five Jews whom they forced to sign a statement to the effect that they themselves had set fire to the synagogues and prayer-houses. As a penalty for this supposed arson the Jews were made to pay an indemnity of 100,000 zlotys.

"That same evening, September 24, the Germans took about 1,500 Jews out of their houses and led them to the Wloclawek prison. On the way they were made to lie down with their faces to the ground while the Germans counted them, striking them hard with the butts of their guns.

"The floors of the prisons into which the Jews were thrown were littered with broken glass on which the unfortunates were made to lie. All night the Jews were brutally beaten, and one of them, Czyzyk, died of the blows. For twenty-four hours, the arrested Jews were tortured, then the older ones were released and sent home, while the rest were detained in prison for eight weeks. All during that time they were forced to perform hard labor and were brutally beaten. They were not given any food or drink, but from time to time food was permitted to

be brought to them from the town. All the money found on them was taken away.

"Besides the indemnity for the synagogue fires the Jews were made to pay a second fine of 200,000 zlotys for violating the prohibition against using the sidewalk. When a third indemnity of 250,000 zlotys was imposed, the Jews, by now unable to meet the demand, were allowed to make the payment in installments.

"The Jews of Wloclawek were driven out of their homes, robbed, tortured, and forced to do hard labor. Jewish women were raped. Finally, nearly all Jews were driven out of town in separate groups until by March 1940 there was hardly a Jew left."

The small town of Mielec, near Krakow, with a Jewish population of 3,000, lay directly in the path of the advancing German armies. The Germans occupied it on September 13, 1939, and immediately staged a horrifying massacre of Jews. In the martyrology of Polish Jewry, Mielec will occupy a prominent place, for there German barbarism displayed itself in all its unrestrained fury. The atrocities which the Germans committed on the unfortunate Jews were of an unprecedented cruelty. Several details are given by one of the inhabitants, Moshe Friedman:

"On September 13, the eve of *Rosh-Hashanah*, there were 35 Jews in the community baths. The Germans forced their way in and drove the Jews, naked as they were, to the nearby slaughter house. They poured gasoline over the building and set fire to it. From the slaughter house came the shrieks of the imprisoned Jews, then the mournful sound of *Viddui*, the prayer of the dying, when the victims saw that their end was near. The German torturers were unmoved and they allowed their victims to perish.

"On the same *Rosh-Hashanah* night, the Germans set fire to the synagogue and the religious schools and would not allow the Jews to extinguish the flames.

"At the same time they gathered 200 Jews in the street, made them stand against the wall with arms raised, and after a few hours announced that they were going to shoot them. In an agony of fear, the Jews remained standing against the wall, expecting that any moment would be their last.

"On the following morning, September 14, the Germans set fire to the Rabbi's religious school and fifteen Jewish homes.

"The Germans took pictures of all these heroic deeds; they apparently found it necessary to immortalize their barbarities. They also photographed Jews in various comical poses.

"On September 15, while their bestiality raged through the town, they seized 14 Jews on the street, led them outside of the town, and shot them.

"In the space of the first few days of the German occupation of the town, the number of Jewish victims, including the Jews burned in the slaughter house, amounted to 47.

"The days that followed brought the usual German persecutions, but these seemed trivial in comparison with the above-mentioned horrors.

"On September 22, Yom Kippur Eve, the Germans demanded that the Jews turn over to them 10,000 zlotys. To insure payment they arrested 80 Jews, women among them.

"On *Yom Kippur*, they broke into Jewish homes. Wherever they found Jews in praying garments at prayer, they seized them and dragged them off for forced labor. Still wearing their praying shawls the Jews were compelled to sweep the streets.

"At the same time, the Germans systematically looted Jewish stores of merchandise and households of furnishings, money, and jewelry, until gradually the Jews were stripped of everything they owned."

ATROCITIES IN LUKOW

Several details of the atrocities performed on the Jews of Lukow are given by one of the inhabitants, Zwi Sorokow:

"The Germans occupied Lukow on September 19. On September 20 they ordered all Jews, men and women, to assemble on Plac Wolnosci (Place of Freedom), near the City Hall.

"Not content with issuing the order, the Germans went around to Jewish houses and brutally dragged the Jews from their homes. They shot and killed the Chairman of the Organization of Orthodox Jews, Jacob Srebrenik, Dawid Goldman and Feigenzweig. When all the Jews had been herded in Plac Wolnosci, they were made to separate into two groups, the men on one side and the women opposite them, and commanded to lie face down on the ground. The entire crowd of Jews did as ordered. Then the Germans let go a volley of gunfire over the heads of the prostrate Jews. The gunfire kept up for a long time while the Jews remained on the ground in an agony of terror.

"While this was going on the Germans set fire to several Jewish houses in various localities. Twenty-five Jewish homes were burned down.

"After terrorizing the Jews on Plac Wolnosci for several hours, the Germans released the women and permitted them to go home; of the

men, 1,000 were led out of the town in the direction of Siedlce on the way to a concentration camp. As was the barbaric German custom, they were driven along the road. At the head of the column rode German motorcycles; the Jews were forced to run after them, panting and out of breath, and at the rear rode German soldiers in two cars watching to see that the Jews kept up their fast pace. Those who were too exhausted to keep on running after the motorcycles were summarily shot. More than 20 Jews were shot in this way, among them Isaac Feingold, Chaim Heftman, Itzchok Mayer Lerner, Shemai Weitzman, Mattathias Friedlander and Szlomo Rosenstein

"When the Jews reached Siedlce they were confined in the notorious Siedlce prison, where they were kept for the night

"On the following morning, September 21, the Jews were led out of jail and driven to the concentration camp of Wengrow. On the way from Siedlce to Wengrow, the unfortunate Jews again were compelled to run and again those who were too weak to keep up the pace were shot by the Germans.

"The behavior of the Germans towards the exhausted Jews was unimaginably cruel. A 17-year old boy fell unconscious on the road and the Germans picked him up by his hands and feet and heaved him over a fence. He was killed at once. The total number of Jews who died on the journey from Lukow to Siedlce, from Siedlce to Wengrow, and in the concentration camp, amounted to 100.

"Several days later the Russians entered the town and when they left after a few days approximately 500 young Jews went with them out of fear of further German atrocities if the Germans returned. When the Germans entered Lukow the second time they looted the stores of the Jews and daily seized Jews for forced labor.

"In December the situation of the Jews remaining in Lukow became even worse. Frequently the Germans imposed huge fines on them and tortured them mercilessly.

"The life of the Jews in Lukow is no better than the life of their brethren in other towns which the Germans occupied. Torture, degradation, and hunger—this is their mournful fate."

These facts, presented by an eyewitness before a representative of the World Jewish Congress in Wilno, reflects the typical pattern of the Nazi system of destruction. First, breaking the morale of the victims by terrorization, then robbery, burning of houses and physical torture.

But these were merely the preliminaries. After the Jews had been duly humiliated, shocked, terrorized and exhausted there followed the

introduction of laws and decrees designed to prepare the defenseless and morally and physically worn out victims for their final destruction by mass slaughter. This plan was facilitated by the introduction of the Ghettos.

The Ghettos, however, came comparatively late, after the Blitzkrieg and after the Blitzpogrom which had been unfolded in full scale with the start of the invasion.

There is concrete evidence that the whole plan was conceived at the very outset of the invasion of Poland. Hitler himself, in his address to the Reichstag on October 6, 1939, stated that the solution of the Jewish problem was one of the six cardinal German aims in the "Eastern area." After declaring that the whole problem of Lebensraum was to be organized in conformity with the principle of nationalities, "which means the solution of the minority-problems," he said: "In this connection, an experiment will be made with organizing and regulating the Jewish problem." What ominous meaning those apparently innocent words implied, was demonstrated by subsequent events.

CHAPTER TWO

THE MARTYRDOM OF WARSAW JEWRY

I. BEFORE THE CREATION OF THE GHETTO

WARSAW CAPITULATED after three weeks of resistance and heroic struggle. On September 29, 1939, the German army marched into the capital of Poland; the Jewish quarters of the city had been subjected to an especially heavy bombardment during the closing days of the siege. From beneath the ruins the Jews began to drag out the corpses that had been buried during the long days of the bombardment.

On the day immediately following the occupation the Mayor of Warsaw, Stefan Starzynski, announced that the German army spokesmen had given their assurance that there would be no discrimination against the Jewish inhabitants. But, as could have been expected, the Germans did not keep their pledge. The persecution of the Jewish community began at once, on the very first day.

OPENING PHASE OF PERSECUTIONS IN POLAND'S CAPITAL

During the sale and distribution of bread to the starved people of Warsaw the Jews were thrown off the queues, German soldiers plundered Jewish homes, shot Jews dead in the streets and dragged off, tortured and insulted men, women and children. Hundreds of Jews, men and women, disappeared for weeks, some of them never to return. Night searches and looting were regular occurrences. German trucks would ride off each day filled with Jewish belongings. Jews who resisted these methods of plunder and terror were beaten up and often killed.

A. M. Hartglass, President of the Zionist Organization of Poland, former member of the Polish Parliament and a member of the Warsaw Jewish Council, who managed to leave Warsaw in April, 1940, recounts in *The Tragedy of Polish Jewry*:



JEWS ARRESTED BY GERMAN SOLDIERS FOR THE 'CRIME'
OF CARRYING SOME FOOD

IN LODZ

Donnerstag, den 16. November 1939

Kennzeichnung der Juden

Juden dürfen nachts ihre Wohnung nicht verlassen

Der Herr Regierungspräsident zu Ralsch, zu dessen Verwaltungsbereich bekanntlich auch Lodz gehört, erließ eine Verordnung, in der es u. a. heißt:

Als besonderes Kennzeichen tragen Juden ohne Rücksicht auf Alter und Geschlecht am rechten Oberarm unmittelbar unter der Achselhöhle eine 10 cm breite Armbinde in judenrotlicher Farbe.

Juden dürfen in der Zeit von 17—8 Uhr ihre Wohnung ohne besondere Genehmigung nicht verlassen

Zumiderhandlungen werden mit dem Tod bestraft. Vorliegen mildernder Umstände kann auf Geldstrafe

in unbeschränkter Höhe oder Gefängnis, allein oder in Verbindung miteinander, erkannt werden.

Die genannte Verordnung tritt bis auf die erwähnte Bestimmung (Armbinde) sofort in Kraft. Die Armbinde wird am 18. November eingeführt.

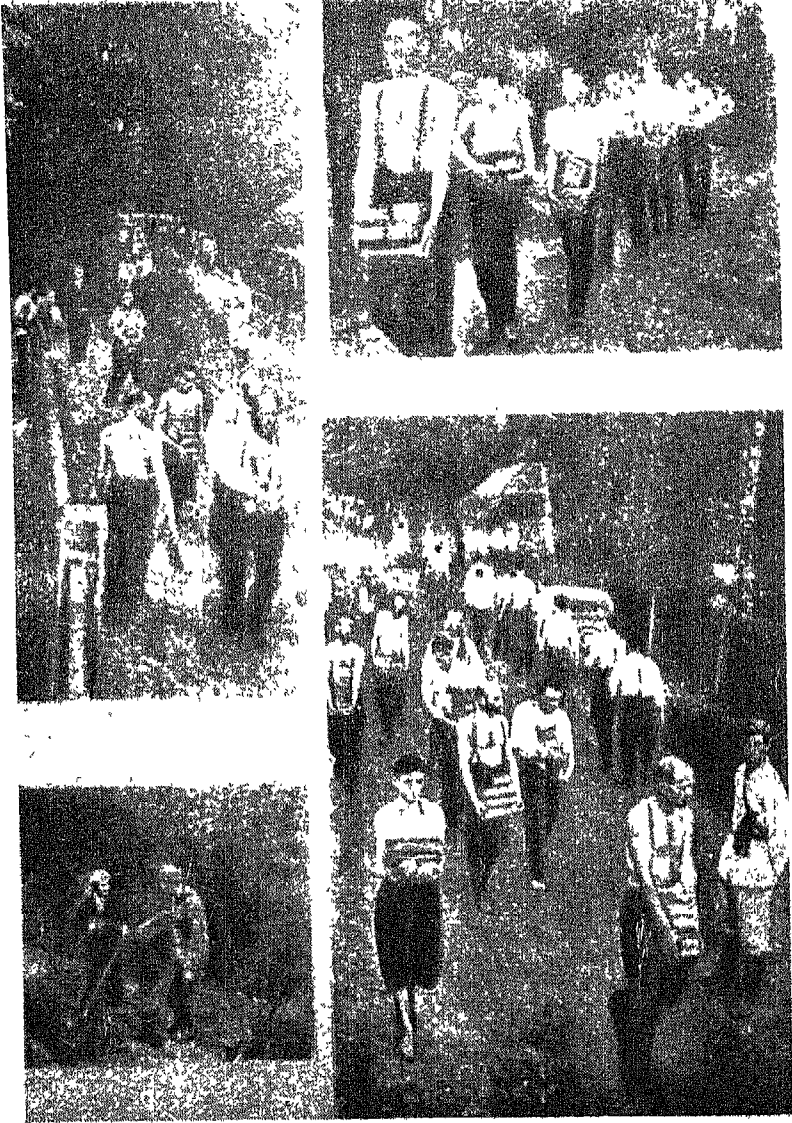
Synagogenbrand

Judentempel in der Kosciuszko-Allee zerstört

Die Synagoge in der Kosciuszko-Allee 9 brannte gestern in den Morgenstunden ab. Der erste und heftigste Feuerschwallen verhinderten ein Ueberrollen des Feuers auf die umstehenden Gebäude.

GERMAN ANNOUNCEMENTS IN OFFICIAL LODZ NEWSPAPER

The first order requires all Jews to wear 'Jewish-yellow' arm bands. The second forbids Jews to leave their homes from 5 P.M. to 8 A.M. The third item announces the burning of the Synagogue on Kosciuszko Avenue.



JEWISH SLAVES

Reproduction of page of German newspaper, *Illustrierte Beobachter*.



SAVING THE DESECRATED SCROLLS FROM A
SYNAGOGUE BURNED BY THE GERMANS



AGED JEWS AT FORCED LABOR

"Looting began immediately. German soldiers and officers entered the shops, took whatever they wanted, and walked out without paying. After the looting was finished the German commandant issued an order prohibiting the soldiers from entering shops without special permission, and the shopkeepers from selling to the soldiers. The Jews were relieved, but only for the moment. The plundering continued. At first Jewish homes were spared, but presently the looting was extended to them as well, and went on at all hours of the day and night. Those who ventured to complain to the authorities were either turned away with a rude answer, or vanished and were never heard of again. Furthermore, the Germans have stolen or confiscated—I do not know which term applies—all the leather goods and textiles. The shops in Franciszkanska Street (the center of Warsaw's leather trade) were pillaged continuously for several weeks. Lorries came day after day, and were loaded from morning to night. The work of loading was done perforce by the shopkeepers themselves and by laborers furnished by the Council of Elders. It is estimated that the goods thus seized were worth millions of zlotys."

Abraham Weiss, formerly head of the Judaistica Institute of Warsaw and active member of the Warsaw Kehillah, who remained in Warsaw until April 9, 1940, and who came to the United States in August 1940 states, in the *Contemporary Jewish Record*, 1940:

"In the first three months of the occupation, the looting usually stopped short of the furniture. Later, however, the Nazis went systematically from house to house and laid hands on whatever they could find. Bedrooms, dining-rooms, even lavatories were stripped. Jews were accosted on the street and forced to help pile up the spoils into waiting cars. Nor was the pillage confined to private dwellings. Shops, factories, warehouses and cultural institutions fared no better. A large proportion of Warsaw's warehouses had been damaged by bombs or ruined in the subsequent fires. There were, however, quite a few which remained standing. These the Nazis began to strip bare.

"What happened in Gesia Street is typical. Gesia Street is the leading factory center. Most of it had been burned down, but there were still a number of warehouses which had somehow escaped destruction. They were immediately sealed. Some time later, the street was abruptly closed to the public and Nazi guards posted at both ends. A row of trucks drove in and remained parked along its entire length. Meanwhile Nazi troopers were busily scouring the neighboring alleys and rounding up Jews. The warehouses were then entered and the Jews ordered to

load the stolen merchandise upon the waiting trucks. The owners of the property received the same payment as these ad hoc porters—bruises. Sometimes, the 'requisitioning' ended in the murder of the owner. In two cases, suicides followed the confiscation. The same thing happened also in other parts of the city, on the half-destroyed Nalewki Street, on Franciszkanska Street and on Gzyzbow Street, home of the metal merchants. It made no difference whether the shop was large or small; all suffered a similar fate."

It was the German intention not only to ruin the Jewish inhabitants economically and make beggars of them, but to exterminate them physically. Physical and moral abuse, attacks in the streets, brutal night searches, arrests accompanied by murder—these were commonplace during the first weeks of the occupation.

Mr. Hartglass writes: "The physical destruction of the Jews is proceeding systematically. Jews are brutally assaulted at every turn. Homes are entered at night, on the pretext of making searches, and the occupants assaulted. The torments are beyond human endurance. Suicides during such visitations are not infrequent. When the Gestapo sent for a certain Jewish merchant of Warsaw who lived in Ogrodowa Street, he jumped out of the window of his home and was killed. He knew that he was to be questioned about his business, and preferred self-inflicted death to such questioning. A Jewish lady named Mme. Sussman also jumped out of a window in order to free herself from the extortions of the Gestapo.

"The Jews of Warsaw never have more than two or three hours of uneasy sleep during the night. Their nerves have been strained to such an extent that they are all but out of their minds. Murders of Jews are of daily occurrence. Often they are massacred by scores or hundreds. . . . There was the case of Stefan Luxemburg, a Jewish goldsmith of Warsaw. When German soldiers attempted to loot his place of business he shouted for help. The soldiers left, but others now came who searched the premises and found German rifle bullets, which of course, they had brought themselves. Luxemburg was taken out and shot. Mr. Norbert Hochman, the proprietor of the Cafe Esplanade and a well-known citizen of Warsaw, was executed on a charge of sabotage, which consisted of leaving his job when set at forced labor."

Moses Kerner, member of the Municipal Council of Warsaw and former member of the Polish Senate, writes in *The Tragedy of Polish Jewry*:

"As soon as the Germans entered Warsaw they began to seize Jews

in the streets and in their homes for forced labor. Old and young, sick and well, were abducted indiscriminately. Jews did not dare venture out of doors for fear of the forced labor, which was accompanied by insults, blows and danger to life itself."

Dr. Abraham Weiss writes: "One of the commonest forms of Nazi brutality was to keep Jews standing for hours, half-naked in the bitter cold, and then to compel them to sing and finally to dig their own graves. Sometimes they were all shot together in a batch. At other times the executions took place singly, each of the victims having first to bury his predecessor.

"The usual procedure of the visits paid by Nazi officials to Jewish homes was for two, three, or more Nazi officers accompanied by a Polish informer to burst into an apartment brandishing revolvers and terrorizing everyone they could find. They would administer a few blows all around, then drawing their revolvers, begin asking questions about hidden arms, money and valuables. Sometimes they would strip their victims naked, men and women alike. Then they would proceed to turn the place upside down, removing not only all cash and jewelry, but also clothes and food. It was characteristic that they did not even wait for the door to be unlocked but broke it down. The residents of the house had to drag into the street whatever the Nazis chose to remove, and if in the process they escaped with only a few cuffs and blows, they could consider themselves lucky. Those people whose homes were commandeered as billets for the Nazis fared infinitely worse. They were peremptorily thrown out, and if ever they were later permitted to return, they invariably found either bare rooms or complete wreckage."

THE FIRST MASS-MURDERS

The first of the mass-murders took place when the Nazis shot 53 Jews in the house at 9 Nalewki Street. The Jews were arrested and shot by the Gestapo when a Jewish thief, Pinchas Zylberberg, shot a Polish policeman who sought to arrest him.

Senator Kerner relates the following: "One day when the Polish constables came to search the premises of a young Jewish dealer in stolen goods (a notorious criminal), he drew his revolver and fired, killing one of the men and wounding the other. Two days later, Gestapo men surrounded the building where this had occurred (9 Nalewki Street) and arrested not only all the Jewish men who lived in the house, but all the other Jews who happened to be there at the time,

On the morning of the third day all the prisoners, 53 in number, were shot. Just before the execution, the men were divided into three groups, and each group was obliged to dig a grave for its predecessors and to bury them. (The third group was buried by the Germans.) The story of what had happened was not disclosed immediately. When the Chairman of the Council went to the Gestapo to ask permission to supply the prisoners with food, he was told that their whereabouts could be revealed only two days later, though the men were then dead and buried. The truth came out only a week after the massacre. A collective fine of 300,000 zlotys was imposed upon the Jewish community of Warsaw, all this because a Jew had killed a Polish constable. To raise so large a sum in Warsaw at such a time within the allotted two-day period appeared impossible. When all efforts to secure a reduction of the fine had failed, the Council decided to pay part of the 300,000 zlotys in cash and the rest in checks drawn against Jewish funds deposited in the banks. The authorities at first agreed, but changed their minds at the last moment and demanded payment of the whole sum in cash. The demand was reinforced with the threat that otherwise five rabbis and five members of the Council would be detained as hostages. The money was found somehow, and the danger averted."

A German account of the incident appeared on December 1, 1939, in the *Krakauer Zeitung* which reported from Warsaw, under the heading, "Polish Policeman Murdered by Jews": "A Polish policeman in uniform was shot while on duty on November 13 in Warsaw at 9 Nalewki Street by a Jewish gang. A second official was dangerously wounded by a shot. The occupants of the house at 9 Nalewki Street hampered the search for the murders, who had fled, by offering open resistance. In the meantime the police succeeded in tracing the murderer, a Jew and professional criminal, Pinchas Jankel Zylberberg, who on account of the war had been prematurely released from prison. In his possession was found the weapon used for the murder. Because of their reprehensible conduct during the police investigations, 53 male Jews from the house at 9 Nalewki Street were shot."

Among the victims were boys of twelve and thirteen years of age. The Germans later justified the execution on the principle of collective responsibility which they introduced all over Poland.

RAIDS ON JEWISH INTELLECTUAL CLASSES

The Nazi policy of extermination was applied to the Jewish intellectual class, the lawyers, physicians, civil engineers, teachers and journal-

ists. Jewish physicians and lawyers would disappear in the middle of the day or after night searches by the Gestapo, and never come back. In some cases the ashes of the victims were sent to their families, or there would be official reports of death "from natural causes" in prison. Some Jewish physicians who had permission to be out on the street after 8 p.m. when they had to visit patients, were shot by German soldiers without cause, and the intervention by the Jewish community was without results.

Mr. Hartglass writes as follows about the arrest and murder of Jewish intellectuals: "In the Warsaw district most of the arrests were made among the Jewish intelligentsia. The day after the Germans entered Warsaw, they arrested Dr. Zamenhof, a nephew of the inventor of Esperanto, and his family. Dr. Zamenhof is said to have frozen to death in prison. On December 10, 1939, mass arrests of the Jewish intelligentsia were made. Almost all have since been released except the physicians and the lawyers, whom the Germans regard as particularly influential. A lawyer named Gamarnikoff died in prison. During the latter part of December 1939, over 150 Jewish intellectuals were arrested in Warsaw. The pretext was an attempted assault upon a Polish constable who discovered a secret Polish broadcasting station. The would-be assailant was a converted Jew by the name of Kot, who is a member of the Polish Socialist Party. The Council of Elders was ordered to deliver this man up to the authorities, otherwise 500 of the Jewish intelligentsia would be arrested.

Dr. Weiss writes as follows about the brutal treatment of the Jewish intelligentsia: "Kot was a young man of about twenty, who was born a Jew, but had been baptized in early childhood. His name was entirely unknown to Jewish circles. According to the Nazis, he was the head of a secret organization directed against them. When the organization was uncovered, the leader fled for his life. Since, however, he was regarded by the Nazis as a Jew, they began a mass roundup of his alleged brethren, accusing them of cooperation in the seditious undertaking. These unfortunate Jews were, of course, completely innocent of the whole affair, but this did not prevent their arrest.

"On another occasion, about 300 Jewish intellectuals were pounced on by a group of Nazis who were going through the streets systematically, armed with long lists of names. If the persons sought were not at home, others were taken instead. Where they were taken and what became of them, no one has ever found out. From that day to this, they have not been seen. Not all of the arrests, however, were made known. Just as often, a Jew would simply go out for a walk and fail to return. Cases of such disappearances were a daily occurrence."

STREET ATTACKS AND HOUSE RAIDS

The brutal attacks on Jews in the streets, which were at first allegedly spontaneous and unorganized, assumed an organized form in the course of the first few months of the German occupation. They took place not only at night when houses were searched, but also in broad daylight in full view of passers-by, Jewish and non-Jewish alike.

I.G., a resident of Warsaw, who arrived in Palestine in March 1940, states in the deposition he made in Jerusalem on April 8, 1940 before the Committee for Polish Jews: "In December 1939 Germans came to an acquaintance of mine, Lipstadt, the owner of a hardware store on Bagno Street in Warsaw, an active Zionist, took away the keys to his store and told him to wait for them near the store on the following day. When with his two brothers-in-law and the employees of the store he stood before the store at the appointed time, the Germans arrived, gave the keys to the owner and ordered him to open the store. Telling the two brothers-in-law and the employees to wait outside, they made Lipstadt walk in with them and there stood him up against the wall and shot him dead. They permitted his body to be taken out."

Mrs. S. B., in her deposition before the Committee for Polish Jews in Jerusalem made on September 11, 1940 states: "At the outbreak of the war I was in Warsaw, my permanent residence being in Palestine. I was an eye-witness to what happened to a good friend of mine, N. P. E., 70 years of age, a well-known personality in Warsaw. The Germans caught him on Nowolipie Street, then detained a Jewish youth who happened to pass on the street and ordered him to give the old man a thorough beating. The youth refused, and in spite of a brutal beating by the Germans persistently refused to obey them. The whole thing happened before the eyes of a large crowd of men and women. Many women became hysterical and implored the Germans to release the Jews. But the Germans paid no attention to their pleas and kept on beating the young man until he fell. I doubt if he remained alive. The old man was thrown by the Germans into a cellar where he was given a merciless beating and where his beard was plucked out. His face was all covered with blood."

I. T., a resident of Warsaw, who arrived in Palestine at the beginning of 1941, states in his deposition of February 2, 1941 made before the Committee for Polish Jews in Tel-Aviv: "One morning in November 1939, when I was walking in the street, I saw a dead man with a note pinned to his body bearing the inscription: Eight minutes past

seven, (he was permitted to be in the streets only till 7 P.M.) Some sergeants rode in a car down Nalewki Street. A woman with a 5 year-old boy was walking on the sidewalk. The car stopped, one of the sergeants stepped out, snatched the child, jumped back into the car and drove off. I heard that they threw the child out of the car into a field."

P. L., a resident of Warsaw who arrived in Palestine in May 1940, in an affidavit made before the same Committee on July 11, 1940 states: "One day my cousin K., 50 years old, a feeble and sick man, was in Grzybowski Square in Warsaw at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Two German officers arrived by car and kidnapped him. They brought him to Wiejska Street (near the Parliament building) to a room where there were already several Jews. They were ordered to undress and they were terribly beaten with rubber truncheons until the blood flowed, Then the Germans tied their hands behind their backs and set fire to their beards. Their hands tied, they were not able to extinguish the fire and their beards burned down to the skin."

A Polish writer, Marja Mikorska, in her book entitled *Spring Held No Hope*, writes: "During the transport of coal in Warsaw an old Jew was killed because he could not pull a very heavily loaded wheelbarrow.

"Once at 11 P.M. three Gestapo officers arrived at a Jewish apartment in Marszalkowska Street in Warsaw. There they found a young seventeen-year-old boy, his mother, his sister, their cousin and a servant. The Germans pushed them all into the same room and stripped them. Later they threatened the boy with a revolver and forced him to masturbate in presence of the four women."

The Black Book of Poland reports the following: "One report states that Jews were employed to bury persons murdered in the Sejm (Parliament) Gardens. In order to force confessions, the same report says, prisoners were tortured horribly. It was customarily true for the tortured people to go out of their minds, and this also applied to the Jews forced into service there. These Jews were frequently compelled to bury people still living, thrusting them into sacks and burying them in the Sejm Gardens. Certain witnesses declare that they saw victims with the skin flayed from their faces, with nails torn away from fingers and toes, and similar horrors.

"On February 14, 1940, another eye-witness states, after 3 P.M. a crowd of Jews with shovels were driven to the place of execution. Forcing them along with butt-ends and whips, the Germans ordered them to dig nine holes. When the holes were ready the Jews were driven over

a little rise, kicked and shouted at as they went. Then a group of Gestapo men conducting more prisoners came from the direction of the Sejm building. One of them was in the uniform of a customs official, two were in police uniforms, without belts and hats, the others were civilians, without caps, overcoats and probably braces, in threes. They were escorted up to the holes and came to a halt at the order of an officer walking, carrying a document case, behind the group. The officer took a sheet of paper no larger than the size of a scribbling pad from his case and after reading something from it turned and went off. The Gestapo men made the first three men stand in line. Six soldiers armed with revolvers went up to them; the revolvers were tipped with silencers—a muffling device. Aiming at the condemned men's chests, the soldiers fired without any word of command. The three men fell. Jews were then summoned and were thrown bayonets to cut the bonds fastening the dead men's hands; then they were ordered to throw the bodies into the first three holes, and cover them with earth. The Jews were driven over the rise again, and the next three condemned men were drawn up for execution."

THE NAZI FURY AGAINST THE JEWISH RELIGION

The brutality of the Germans was especially noticeable in their treatment of rabbis and other religious functionaries and leaders and of everything pertaining to the Jewish religion. Many prayer-houses were burned down or destroyed. Scrolls of the Law and religious books were destroyed, defiled or burned. Many rabbis, without regard to their age, were tortured, their beards were torn off, often with whole chunks of flesh, and they were given the hardest and most menial physical work.

On January 1, 1940 the Germans prohibited Jews from congregating for prayer not only in houses of worship, but even in private homes.

Dr. Weiss says: "It was the practice of Nazi officers to cut off the beards of any bearded Jew they saw. It made no difference whether the wearer was an old and venerable rabbi or a young man with a stubby growth. Sometimes the shearing was done at home, when the Nazis came round to take a census. Sometimes it was done summarily on the street. An officer driving along in his car would sight a bearded Jew in the distance. The car would put on speed and draw up alongside the unfortunate Jew and off would come the beard. A common variation of this practice was to cut only half of the beard, taking care to pull off bits of flesh with it. If scissors were by chance not at hand, an ordinary knife was used, and in that case a swastika would be cut in the victim's hair.

"All assembly of Jews for purposes of prayer was proscribed, and the community was made responsible for seeing that the order was carried out. The measure was allegedly introduced to prevent the spread of infection during the typhus epidemic. Actually, however, it had nothing to do with the epidemic, for synagogues were closed in districts where it was not present, and even small convecticles (minyans) in private houses came under the ban."

Mr. Hartglass says: "Numerous synagogues have been burned to the ground, many rabbis, including Rabbi Kahane of Warsaw, had their beards plucked out when the Germans searched their homes. On several occasions Germans entered synagogues during services and beat the congregation. (This happened before the order forbidding assembly of Jews for purposes of prayer had been issued)."

Moses Kerner states: "The largest synagogue in the Praga quarter of Warsaw was invaded during services by Germans, who ordered Rabbi Silberstein and the whole congregation to go out into the street and dance in their prayer-shawls if they did not want to be shot."

Rabbi D. S. K., in his deposition made on June 26, 1940 before the Committee for Polish Jews in Jerusalem, states: "On the fourth day after the Germans entered Warsaw two Gestapo agents in uniform and one in civilian clothes came into a rabbi's home and cut off his beard. Shouting wildly, they drove everyone out of the room. A few days later two Gestapo men came again, and their behavior this time was even more offensive. One of them said to his companion, 'Look at this man! It was he and his brothers that brought about this war.' Among the silver they found in the house there was also a Chanukah lamp. They flung it onto the ground shouting, 'That is what is left to you of your temple! This is your sinister morality!' They also threw upon the ground religious books and Scrolls of the Law, shouting, 'All this is mere dirt. Here lies all the corruption with which you swamped the whole world.'"

BROTHELS FOR THE CONQUERORS

The racist principles of the Nuremberg Laws were not always strictly applied by the Germans to the Jews of Poland. This was especially true of the primary racist tenet which forbids the mixing of Aryan with Jewish blood. Nazis forced their way into Jewish houses and raped Jewish women, and even young girls. Their brutality in such cases reached extreme proportions.

J. L., a civil engineer who arrived in Palestine in the second half of 1940, in his deposition made before the Committee for Polish Jews in Jerusalem on October 9, 1940 tells the following story:

"In January or in February of 1940 there was a session of the Health Department of the Warsaw municipality at which the Chief Municipal Health Officer, Professor Richter, and Consultant Dr. Schrampf were present. The session had under consideration a proposal by Professor Richter to open a brothel in Warsaw for the German military forces, the Health Department to supply the house with prostitutes, including fifty Jewish girls. When Dr. Lencki, former Chief of the Health Department, who took part in the discussion, asked how this thing could be organized by the Department, which did not have any prostitutes at its disposal, Professor Richter or Dr. Schrampf replied that in such a case the Germans themselves would round up attractive-looking girls on the streets."

The cynicism of the Germans went so far that they ordered the *Judenrat* in Warsaw to establish brothels for the German soldiers.

Confirmation of the fact that Jewish leaders in Warsaw were ordered to organize these houses and provide Jewish girls for them is made by Dr. Henryk Szoszkie, a former member of the Executive of the Warsaw Jewish Community Council, in an affidavit signed in New York City on January 14, 1940, and published in the *Contemporary Jewish Record*, March-April, 1940:

"I hereby affirm that to my own knowledge proposals were made by Nazi officials to the Jewish Community Council to organize houses of prostitution in Nazi-occupied towns, and that Jewish girls be provided for the use of the army.

"On Thursday, November 2, 1939, Unit Leader Wende, a representative of the German Gestapo, came into the office of the Warsaw Jewish Community Council, where I, as a member of the Executive of the Community, had my offices. After asking me to be seated, with no preliminaries of any sort, he declared: 'As you know, we have in Warsaw quite a large garrison of young, healthy men who are suffering from a lack of sexual relations. Casual meetings with women of the streets have already resulted in many cases of venereal diseases. This is a situation which we cannot allow to continue. You are, therefore, in the name of the Gestapo, ordered to indicate to us the persons in your community who will be responsible for the organization of a brothel (he expressed it in German as a "puff") to serve the needs of our army.'

"Incredulous, I asked him: 'Are you in earnest, or are you simply making sport of me?'

"Wende answered brusquely. 'This is not the time for jokes. You come to the central office of the Gestapo at 23 Szucha Street, room 37, at 3 o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, November 4 and bring with you the representatives to whom you will entrust the organization of the brothel. As a matter of fact, we will need two brothels; one for the officers and a separate one for privates. We will indicate to your representatives how to assemble and segregate the girls. We are planning to arrange the officers' brothel quite comfortably. We will furnish you with the best of linen and furniture. Incidentally, this will not be a bad business venture—perhaps the best in present-day Warsaw. The Jewish Community will draw a nice profit from it.'

'I replied: 'Do you realize, Unit Leader, that you are making the most shameful proposal I have ever heard? Do you realize that our Community Council is a religious institution? I tell you now categorically, your order will never be carried out! Nobody in our community will accept it—even if death is the penalty for all of us!'

"Wende looked at me contemptuously and answered: 'Mr. Szoszkies, you take the matter much too tragically. After all you are a man and you can understand us; we need women and we believe that we are proposing a plan for the Jewish community from which it can profit. Don't let the race-laws bother you. War is war, and in such a situation all theories die out. Well?' 'Well, Unit Leader,' I retorted, 'I will *not* come to your office on Saturday, and I will not give you any answer to your proposal. Although I am married and the father of young children, I would rather choose death than conduct any negotiations with you about your suggestion.'

"The Gestapo official then arose. As usual he did not say good-bye. Before leaving, however, he added the command: 'Come on Saturday to room 37 with your answer.'

"I immediately went into the office of the President of the Jewish Community Council, my superior officer. He is a man of over 60 years of age and a chemist by profession. His face was quivering with suppressed sobs as he informed me that at the same time Wende was making his infamous proposal to me, the same suggestion was being made to him by the chief Unit Leader, Captain Botz. This occurred in the former offices of the Polish Education Ministry on Szucha Street.

"We decided to tell only two or three of the most prominent members of the Community Council about this demand out of fear that the news might cause a panic among the Jews, and increase our difficulties.

"Friday morning, November 3, as I sat in the President's office in the Community center, the door opened, and, without a greeting as

usual, the Nazi, Wende, walked in. In accordance with the accepted custom, I stood rigidly at attention. He issued another order: 'We need a palatial two-story home for the officers' brothel. It must contain from 12 to 15 rooms. Here is a permit for you to confiscate such a home. Take a Jewish one if there are any, if not take a Christian one. Tomorrow, Saturday, I will expect an answer from you, and a suggestion about the location.'

"I replied: 'Not tomorrow, Saturday, and not ever, will you receive an answer.'

"The next day, Saturday, November 4, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, I, of course, had not gone to the office of the Gestapo. I sat in the office of the Community Center. At 4 o'clock I heard the sound of an automobile in the street. I knew who it was as this was the only automobile which appeared on the ruined street in which the Community center was located.

"Unit Leader Wende stormed into the room. His face was ablaze with anger. He twisted his riding-stick in his hands. I arose, prepared for anything. 'So you didn't come after all?' I remained silent. 'You are lucky, but not for long. We have been forced to postpone the setting-up of the brothels because in your wretched town all the suitable buildings are burned down. In about two weeks, however, we will return to this question.'

"Before these two weeks elapsed, I had succeeded in crossing the Polish border. What further negotiations were carried on with my friends and colleagues of the Community Council I only know from the newspaper reports."

THE HUMILIATION OF JEWISH WOMEN

The Germans gave up the project to have the *Judenrat* establish brothels for them, but the German soldiers continually insulted and humiliated Jewish women. Many became infected with venereal diseases; many, unable to bear the moral and physical tortures, committed suicide.

I. L. states in his deposition: "In February, 1940 the Germans began rounding up Jewish women for forced labor. One afternoon a truck came to Solna Street in Warsaw, and Jewish women of the district were forced into it. The procedure was frequently repeated afterwards. Girls would disappear for several days and come home after having been attacked. The attractive wife of a Jew on the Iron Gate Place was abducted and permitted to return home after she had been raped."

Dr. S. S. of Warsaw in his affidavit of May 12, 1940 made before

the Committee for Polish Jews in Jerusalem, states: "One continually hears of the raping of Jewish girls in Warsaw. The Germans suddenly enter a house and rape 15- or 16-year-old girls in the presence of their parents and relatives. The surgeon-gynecologists, of course keeping secret the names of their victims, state that in their practice they have many cases of girls who have been raped under simliar conditions, and it is necessary to administer antitetanus injections. In one mirror-shop in Swietojerska Street there was a mass raping of Jewish girls. The Germans seized the most beautiful and most healthy girls in the streets and brought them in to pack the mirrors. After the work the girls were raped."

In the *Free Europe* pamphlet *The Persecution of Jews*, there appears the following report: "One of the most disgusting orgies on the part of German officers took place in the house of M. Szereszewski, a well-known Warsaw Jew, in Pius Street in Warsaw.

"As a result of a raid carried out in Franciszkanska Street, 40 Jewish girls were dragged into the house which was occupied by the German officers. There, after being forced to drink, the girls were ordered to undress and to dance for the amusement of their tormentors. Beaten, abused and raped, the girls were not released till 3 A.M."

The report made by Mr. Hartglass states: "A story is current that one day 50 Jewish girls were seized in Warsaw, taken to an apartment formerly occupied by a wealthy Jewish family and now taken over by German officers, and there raped. One night a party of Germans entered a Jewish home in Warsaw, locked the husband and wife in the bathroom and compelled their young daughter to disrobe. Then she was ordered to sit down. The girl seated herself on a chair. No, she must sit on the floor! She sat down on a rug. No, on the bare floor!

"The home of a Jewish woman lawyer was entered one evening while she was entertaining some women friends and a young couple. All the women were forced to strip and dance on the table, and the young couple to cohabit in the presence of all the others. Every apartment in Warsaw is now occupied by several families of relatives or friends. When houses are searched all the inmates are assembled and compelled to undress completely, so as to make certain they are not concealing anything."

THE ORGANIZATION OF MASS-POGROMS

In course of time the Germans passed from isolated, "spontaneous" attacks against Jews to well-organized mass-pogroms. They made use

of certain anti-Semitic hoodlum elements in the Polish population, especially the *Nara* (the extreme anti-Semitic National Radical Party) and similar groups, to show that the whole Polish population was against the Jews and that the anti-Semitic excesses were the product of the Polish population's hatred of the Jews.

Certain Polish circles, especially the youth and the underworld, were carried away by the German propaganda, and during Passover of 1940 staged a pogrom in Warsaw. The Polish workers and intellectuals refused to be identified with the movement and showed their sympathy for the Jews.

Dr. S. S. who lived in Warsaw and who is now in Jerusalem, stated in his affidavit dated May 12, 1940:

"The Passover pogrom continued about eight days. It began suddenly and stopped as suddenly. The pogrom was carried out by a crowd of youths, about 1,000 of them, who arrived suddenly in the Warsaw streets. Such types have never before been seen in the Warsaw streets. Clearly these were young ruffians specially brought from the suburbs. From the characteristic scenes of the pogrom I mention here a few: On the second day of Passover, at the corner of Wspolna and Marszalkowska Streets about 30 or 40 broke into and looted Jewish hat shops. German soldiers stood in the streets and filmed the scenes.

"My assistant told me that he saw on Zelazna Brama Place how two military men whispered something into the ear of a Pole. The result was that he suddenly attacked a Jew and began to beat him. Then one of the Germans pretended to protect the Jew and beat the Pole, and the second German filmed this scene. The chief of the labor office in the Jewish Community, Mr. Rozen, went to Brandt, the chief official of the Gestapo who is in control of the Jewish Community, asking him to intervene in the pogrom. Brandt assured Rozen that he would give an order to stop the disturbances, and that he could quietly return to the Community office. But when Mr. Rozen was on his way, just in front of the building of the Jewish Community, the hooligans dragged him from his car and began to beat him, breaking his hand and ribs.

"At the corner of Krolewska Street and Marszalkowska stood a Pole in a driver's suit, speaking to two other men. When a Jew passed by he let him through and then from the back began to beat him on the head. When the Jew did not flee immediately he beat him until he fell and then began kicking him. When the Gestapo was again asked to give orders to stop the pogrom, the Germans demanded that the Jewish Community should send a written request asking the German authorities to act against the Poles. The Jews understood that the Germans wanted

to obtain an anti-Polish document from the Jews and the Community refused to send such a request. The reason why the pogrom was stopped was perhaps this: an official of the Joint (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee) who was called to Krakow to discuss the organization of social relief, told the official of Governor General Arlt, that so long as pogroms continued it was out of the question to arrange for any organized social relief. Probably because of this the Germans ordered the ruffians to be sent away and the pogrom was stopped.

"The Polish youngsters acted alone, but there have been instances when such bands attacked the Jews with the assistance of German military. The attitude of the Polish intellectuals toward the Jews was clearly a friendly one, and against the pogrom. It is a known fact that at the corner of Nowogrodzka Street and Marszalkowska a Catholic priest attacked the youngsters participating in the pogrom, beat them and disappeared. These youngsters received two zlotys daily from the Germans.

"After the New Year the position of the Jews in Warsaw grew worse. Looting which in the beginning was only incidental and followed in the wake of the chaos, now became systematic and organized. Jewish homes were robbed systematically, street after street, house after house. Clearly, somebody had prepared the pogrom. For example, there was a time when the houses of Jewish lawyers were robbed, not a single one being omitted. Arrests were made on such a mass scale, and so suddenly, that people feared to sleep at home. There were many cases of torture of Jews.

"In Praga suburb Mr. Zarichman, the owner of a house, was arrested. The Gestapo demanded 8,000 zlotys for his release. The family could not at first get such a sum, but at last the wife of Mr. Z., a beautiful and healthy woman, went to the Gestapo with the money and did not return. For a long time nobody knew where she was. After some time she was found at night in a street, unconscious, with broken legs and arms and wounded in several parts of the skull. After she was brought to a hospital and examined, it was found that her legs and arms had been broken in several places in a bestial manner. The woman had lost her memory and could not remember what had happened to her. She remembered only that she was brought to a room in Szucha Street (i.e. the Gestapo house), but apart from this she didn't remember anything. This occurred before the New Year."

ATTITUDE OF POLES TOWARDS JEWS

Concerning the attitude of the Poles toward the Jews at that time, Mr. Hartglass says: "The relations are good in the areas annexed to the Reich. The same kind of treatment is meted out on both peoples. In the Warsaw district the relations have improved. With few exceptions, the Polish intellectuals are friendly toward the Jews and help them when they can. The same is true of the organized workingmen and of the thinking people. But the attitude of the Polish masses remains unchanged. It is such people who point out Jewish homes to the Germans and help them plunder the Jews. Occasionally, they attack Jewish passers-by, but such attacks are not common. There is also another side to the picture. Poles often rise and offer their seats when women wearing the Jewish badge enter street cars. Once a German soldier came into a tram shouting '*Juden raus!*' Thereupon a dignified elderly Pole rose and said: '*If the Jews go, we go too.*' He left the car and was followed by all the other Poles present. It is true, however, that there have been instances of elderly Jews being forced off cars by Polish youths. But all in all, the Polish attitude toward the Jews is far more favorable than previously.

"The Polish anti-Semites have not joined forces with Germans. Only one of the anti-Semitic groups, the Falange, made overtures to the Germans, suggesting that it be co-opted in governing the Jews, since its program was akin to that of the Nazis. The Germans brushed this proposal aside."

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE WARSAW JUDENRAT

Immediately after the Germans entered Warsaw, there was a stop to all communal Jewish activity. All Jewish institutions, and the houses of worship were ordered closed. The Jewish community organization was broken up and many of its members left Warsaw. A rump community organization, however, continued to function temporarily.

On October 4, 1939, the Gestapo dissolved the existing Community Council and appointed a *Judenrat* consisting of twenty-four members under the chairmanship of Adam Czerniakow; its functions were mainly to carry out the orders of the occupation authorities. But even those could not be carried out for lack of funds. The need of the Jewish population grew as thousands lost their homes and hundreds of families lost their breadwinners.

The first order received by the *Judenrat* was to make a census of the

Jewish population in Warsaw. This occupied all its energies and by October 28, 1939 the census was completed, showing that the number of Jews in Warsaw at that time was 359,827. In January 1940 Warsaw had 378,979 Jews, and 1,761 baptized Jews whom Germans considered Jews.

Senator Kerner reports the following on the first days of the *Judenrat* and its relations with the Gestapo:

"On October 4, 1939, while the Jewish Civilian Committee was in session in the Community building, Gestapo agents forced the locked door of the meeting-room. Brandishing their whips, they ordered the members out of the building, and proceeded to make a thorough search of every room. The sum of 27,000 zlotys was abstracted from the Community's safe by Gestapo officers. Mr. Czerniakow, the chairman of the Community Council, was summoned to the Gestapo headquarters and instructed to appoint a council of twenty-four members to administer Jewish communal affairs. Among those appointed were representatives of the Jewish parties and institutions.

"The first task imposed upon the newly constituted Council was to take a census of the Jewish population of Warsaw. The order was accompanied by a threat that the lives of all the members of the Council would be forfeited in the event of non-compliance. A time limit of ten days was fixed. Next the Council was required to take a special census of Jews in the professions—lawyers, engineers, physicians, journalists, etc. Apart from these censuses, the Council was forbidden to engage in any activity whatever. Immediately after the occupation, all the departments of the Jewish Community Organization, with the exception of that in charge of burials were closed by order of the German authorities. Petitioning was required before the social department was given permission to function. When Community representatives asked the authorities how the social services could be financed, seeing that they were not permitted to collect the communal taxes, the reply was that they did have one source of income, in the cemetery."

THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH THE WARSAW GHETTO

The *Judenrat* could do very little under such circumstances. Its field of activity was circumscribed. Members of the praesidium heard all sorts of rumors about impending legislation to oppress Jews, each report being worse than the next. On Saturday, November 4, 1939 the members of the *Judenrat* were ordered to assemble to hear an urgent decree

relating to the setting up of a Ghetto for the Jews in Poland. Senator Kerner tells about the extraordinary session of the *Judenrat*.

"On that day (Saturday, November 4, 1939), the Council was ordered to convene all its members and their deputies. Only ten of the twenty-four deputies attended the meeting, which was held in the Community building. An officer and several sergeants of the Gestapo lined up all present in two rows, the members on the right and the deputies on the left. When fourteen deputies were found to be absent, the Council was ordered to produce fourteen other deputies in the meeting-room within twenty minutes, and were warned that the least delay would involve the death penalty. Since the time limit was so short and communication with other parts of the city still difficult, it was decided to appoint all who happened to be in the building at that time, and a few passers-by. The fourteen men were, in fact, assembled within a few minutes. A quarter of an hour after issuing his ultimatum, the officer re-entered the room, holding his watch in his hand, and reminded the assembly that only five more minutes remained at their disposal. When the time limit had expired, he read off the names in the list to make certain that all the designated persons were present.

"Having settled the matter of the deputies to his satisfaction, the officer took a map of Warsaw out of his pocket and informed the Council that by order of the authorities, all Jews living outside the area designated for a Jewish part of settlement would have to leave their present quarters. To ensure compliance with the edict, the twenty-four deputies would be detained as hostages. The words were no sooner uttered than soldiers entered the room, led out the twenty-four deputies and carted them off to prison, beating them mercilessly on the way.

"The Council then examined the map of the proposed Ghetto and found the plan to be wholly unpracticable. One hundred and sixty thousand additional Jewish families and their household effects could not possibly be crowded into an already congested district. Moreover, a typhoid epidemic was raging in the city at the time. Many of the Jewish institutions (hospital, cemetery, etc.) were situated in districts to which the Jews were denied access under the Ghetto plan. When these difficulties were pointed out to the Gestapo officer, he replied that he had merely carried out his orders, and advised them to apply to the Commandant. The Council thereupon appealed to the German General-in-chief, the chief medical officer of the German forces, the Polish civilian committee and the Mayor."

An account of the intervention with the German military com-

mander is given by Dr. Henryk Szoszkics, a member of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw:

"A delegation of the Council, therefore, appeared the next day before General Neumann, the German Military Commander of Warsaw, to prove to him that the Ghetto edict could not be carried out as specified. General Neumann showed great astonishment when informed that such an order had been given. He not only denied its issuance but informed the delegation that there was evidently some misunderstanding and promised to investigate the matter while keeping the delegation waiting.

"Thirty minutes later he called us in and directed us to the Chief of the Gestapo for an explanation. Furious at our complaint, the Gestapo chief swore, insulted us and struck at us with the whip in his hand.

"We asked for the release of the twenty-four hostages but were told they would be executed despite their complete innocence. For five ensuing days panic prevailed among the Jews. Crowds of women besieged the community building for rescue of the hostages. On the sixth day, the twenty-four condemned Jews were freed." (*Contemporary Jewish Record*, January-February, 1940).

The introduction of a Ghetto in Warsaw was for the time being shelved and the Jewish population breathed a little more freely. But the decision to introduce the Ghetto was not rescinded and hung over the heads of the Jewish population until it was finally carried out in October, 1940, at which time no action on the part of the *Judenrat* could be of any avail.

The Jews who lived in that section of Warsaw which was to become part of the Ghetto were not permitted to move out of its boundaries. The Jews expelled from the provincial towns who came into Warsaw were permitted to live only in sections assigned for the Ghetto. The homes of the Jews who lived outside the limits of the prescribed areas were confiscated. Thus the way was systematically paved for the introduction of the Ghetto.

DUTIES OF THE JUDENRAT DEFINED. FORCED LABOR

On November 28, 1939 the Governor-General issued a decree concerning the establishment of *Judenraten*. On June 7, 1940 the regulations to carry the decree into effect were issued. According to the decree the *Judenraten* were to be elected by the Jewish population, but were in fact nominated by the occupying forces.

The duties of the *Judenrat* were set out in the decree as follows:

"The *Judenrat* is obliged, through its president or his deputy, to accept the commands of the German authorities. It is responsible for the conscientious carrying out of those commands. The orders which it issues for the carrying out of those German commands must be obeyed by all Jews and Jewesses."

The main work of the *Judenrat*, according to an order of the Gestapo, was to supply Jews for forced labor and for the various labor camps in different parts of Poland. In the Official Gazette of the Gouvernement-General for the Polish territories of October 26, 1939, a decree was published concerning forced labor for Jews from twelve to sixty years of age, for a term of two years. But the term was subject to extension if in the course of two years the "educational objectives" had not been attained. The Jews had to bring their own implements, which they were forbidden to sell without permission under a severe penalty.

The *Judenrat* was responsible for the registration of Jews for forced labor and for carrying it out. At first Jews were rounded up on the streets, and even the sick and the aged were not spared. After the law was promulgated, the Community established labor battalions into which it recruited Jews to be sent to special labor camps. The Warsaw *Judenrat* managed to supply 8,000 Jewish laborers every day; 3,500 Jews worked every day in Biala-Podlaska.

Dr. Emil Strodthoff makes the following observation about forced labor in the *Voelkischer Beobachter* of November 28, 1939:

"It gives us particular pleasure to use the beloved gentlemen of Abraham's seed for carrying straw and setting up camps. Their hollow excuses were of no avail. We simply went through the streets collecting them, and whoever, despite a friendly request, thought he had no time, was soon taught better. During a war there is no time to waste, and there are—thank God—plenty of ways of dealing with recalcitrant Jews."

A report from Copenhagen published in the *Manchester Guardian*, February 19, 1940, states:

"Man-hunts for Jews in the streets still continue and no Jew who leaves his home is sure of coming back. The humiliations and tortures inflicted upon the Jewish workmen, who are compelled by their Nazi overseers to dance and sing and undress during their work, and are even forced to belabor each other with blows, show no sign of abating."

The *Judenrat* continually had to send workers to build the barracks for the Jewish labor battalions. Besides it had to carry out certain jobs ordered by the German army. Jewish laborers had to work under the worst conditions and their barracks lacked the most elementary hygienic

necessities. The *Judenrat* had to provide the Jews in the labor barracks with medical attention and medical supplies.

For breakfast the Jewish laborers received black coffee with bread, and for their midday meal only bread and thin potato soup. On returning from the labor camps they were broken in body and in spirit, and the *Judenrat* had to take care of them and their families until they could return to some semblance of a normal condition. Although the decree of April, 1940 did not preclude the Jews from receiving remuneration for their labor, the Germans simply did not pay them, and the *Judenrat* had to pay them out of its own funds. The aged and the infirm were exempt from forced labor and had to pay a tax into the *Judenrat* which the latter applied to paying the poorest among the slave laborers. Jewish workingmen did not benefit from the public welfare bodies. According to the decree of March 7, 1940 they had to be members of the sick benefit fund, but according to the same decree they could have medical assistance only to a limited extent, and they were excluded from sick and disability insurance. In practice, however, Jewish workers were entirely deprived of any kind of help from the sick benefit fund, to which they were forced to contribute.

DISCRIMINATION IN FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The distribution of food for the entire population in Poland was regulated by a special system of ration cards, the amount given to the Jews being smaller than to any other group of the population. Officially the Poles were to receive half of what the Germans received, while the ration for Jews was half of that for the Poles. But even within the limits of the official ration the Jews did not receive everything they were entitled to receive, and suffered acute hunger. Only a small number of Jews could manage to buy certain foods on the "black market."

The *Judenrat* had to bear the whole burden of feeding the Jewish population by organizing soup-kitchens and house-committees. The *Judenrat* Department of Social Welfare organized house-to-house "spoonful-projects" to feed the hungry Jewish children. In the summer of 1940, 22,000 house committees were active among the Jewish population in Warsaw.

HUNGER AND DISEASE

The terrible overcrowding in the Ghetto, with five or six people living in one room, combined with the lack of sufficient food, caused the

outbreak of many epidemics among the Jewish population. The number of tubercular people grew and Jewish children suffered a great deal from diphtheria. The Germans did not issue any anti-diphtheria serum for the Jews and Jewish physicians who remained in Warsaw were permitted to attend Jewish patients only. In March, 1940 Dr. Walbaum, Chief of the Health Department of the Gouvernement-General ordered that the Jewish sick should be treated only by Jewish physicians. The order was "justified" by the allegation that there were more epidemics among the Jews than among the rest of the population.

The Jewish hospital on Czysza Street, which before the war had 1,490 beds and employed 147 physicians, 59 internes, 119 nurses, 13 bacteriologists and 6 pharmacists, was now struggling against tremendous difficulties. The financial subsidy which the hospital used to receive from the Warsaw municipality was now discontinued and the entire burden of maintaining the hospital fell on the *Judenrat*. The hospital had no medicines, and did not have the serums for anti-typhoid injections, the Germans having looted the hospital of all its supplies, including even canned milk. In December, 1939 the Germans ordered the evacuation of the Jewish hospital, in which there were at the time 1,900 patients, including 1,200 sick with typhoid fever.

The Community sought to delay the evacuation and the Gestapo ordered a special session of the *Judenrat*. The superintendent of the hospital was arrested, the physicians were detained at the hospital and held incommunicado. The *Judenrat* appointed a special committee to take care of the urgent needs of the hospital and voted 2,000 zlotys (400 dollars) for the most elementary daily requirements. Despite all efforts the Jewish hospital was evacuated and the *Judenrat* had to establish small hospital units in various houses in the Ghetto.

The extent of sickness among the Jews of Warsaw is shown by the following figures: In 1940, TOZ (the Society for the Promotion of Health among Jews) rendered medical assistance to 119,329 persons in clinics and in private homes, gave medicines to 101,573 children, and distributed cod liver oil among 25,000 children.

The mortality among Jews compared to the period before the war grew to alarming proportions. The overcrowding, the unsanitary conditions and the lack of nourishing food, as well as the brutal attitude of the Gestapo were the causes of the increased mortality. In November 1939, 708 Jews died in Warsaw, while in the same month of the following year, 1,179. From November 1938 to June 1939 inclusive 3,175 Jews died in Warsaw, whereas during the same period in the following

year the number was 8,695. These figures do not include the thousands of Jews who died during the bombardment.

On April 12, 1940 the *Waschauer Zeitung* states that on March 31, 1940 out of 281 cases of typhoid fever in Warsaw, 268 were Jews, and that on April 8, 1940 there were 293 Jews out of a total of 305 cases. According to the reports of the Central and Eastern European Planning Board, in the month of October, November and December of 1939 there were in Warsaw 97 cases of typhoid, in the same months of 1940, 1,949 cases, 90% of which were Jews. In 1940 alone the TOZ administered 51,154 injections against epidemics.

The mortality among Jews grew from week to week and increased inordinately after the introduction of the Ghetto.

The rise in mortality and epidemics was also contributed to by the large number of refugees who flocked to Warsaw from many cities and towns and whose number reached tens of thousands. The precise number was known only after the Ghetto was introduced.

II. THE GHETTO IS ESTABLISHED

Before the Ghetto was established the Germans in the parts of Warsaw where Jews lived in compact masses built high walls which separated the Jewish streets from the rest of the section. On July 1, 1940 the *Warschauer Zeitung* published a decree according to which: (1) Jews coming into Warsaw from other towns must live in the Jewish district behind the wall; (2) Jews living in other parts of Warsaw must, on leaving their dwellings, move to the walled-in district. At the same time an order was issued prohibiting Jews from leaving the walled-in district between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m., while Jews living in other parts of Warsaw were not permitted to leave their homes between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. Warsaw was divided into three sections: the finest residential section for the Germans, the center of the city and the industrial suburbs for the Poles and the so-called "infested area" for the Jews.

The Jewish population lived in constant terror. Rumors began to spread about the introduction of a Ghetto and the *Judenrat* stood on guard. After the erection of the walls around the Jewish district and after the restriction of their freedom of movement, Jews expected the worst.

On October 16, 1940 a decree was issued establishing a Ghetto in Warsaw, and all Jews had to move into it, while the Poles living within it had to move out by October 31, 1940. Approximately 140,000 Jews who lived outside the Ghetto were forced to leave their homes.

The decree created a panic among the Jews, 140,000 of whom had only four weeks in which to move from their homes and find new ones in a district which was already badly overcrowded. At the same time 80,000 Poles had to move out.

The factories, places of business and workshops of the Jews which were outside the Ghetto were confiscated by the Germans or simply looted by them. The furniture was largely taken over by Germans. During the moving and changing many Jews were beaten up, and some "disappeared."

Tosia Bialer, a refugee, who together with her husband and son escaped from the Warsaw Ghetto, and arrived in the U.S.A. in 1942, published an account of her experiences in *Colliers*, (February 2, 1943). The following is an excerpt:

"The last week of October 1940 was a nightmare of congestion and confusion. Try to picture one third of a large city's population, six hundred thousand people, moving through the streets in an endless stream, pushing, wheeling, dragging, carrying all their belongings from

every part of the city to one small section, crowding one another more and more as they converged. No cars, no horses, no help of any sort was available to us by order of the occupying authorities. Pushcarts were about the only method of conveyance we had, and these were piled high with household goods, furnishing much amusement to the German onlookers, who delighted in overturning the carts and seeing us scrambling for our effects. Many of the goods were confiscated arbitrarily without any explanation. Warsaw was an open highway, with the highwaymen in undisputed control. Everything that could not be transported in time was left behind after the moving and was declared ownerless and divided up among the Germans and their sympathizers.

"In the Ghetto, as some of us had begun to call it half ironically and in jest, there was appalling chaos. Thousands of people were rushing around at the last minute trying to find a place to stay. Everything was already filled up but still they kept coming and somehow more room was found. The narrow, crooked streets of the most dilapidated section of Warsaw were crowded with pushcarts, their owners going from house to house asking the inevitable question; Have you room? The sidewalks were covered with their belongings. Children wandered, lost and crying, parents ran hither and yon seeking them, their cries drowned in the tremendous hubbub of half a million uprooted people.

"The first days were spent in getting a foothold in our new surroundings, clearing up affairs, and trying to establish a design for living.

"And then came the fifteenth of November, 1940, the day that none of us will ever forget.

"In the morning, as on every other, men and women get out on their way to work, storekeepers, employees, executives, most of whom worked in the non-Jewish section. As they came to the various points where thoroughfares and streets crossed from the Jewish section into the non-Jewish districts, they ran against barbed wire strung across and guarded by German police who were stopping all traffic out of the Jewish section. Hastily they tried other streets, avenues, alleys, only to find in every case barbed wire or a solid brick wall well guarded. There was no way out any more.

"Quickly the news spread through the section. Other people came out of their houses and started to stare at the barricades, pathetically silent, stunned by the frightful suspicion that was creeping into their minds. Then, suddenly, the realization struck us. What had been, up till now, seemingly unrelated parts—a piece of wall here, a blocked-up house there, another piece of wall somewhere else—had overnight been joined to form an enclosure from which there was no escape. The

barbed wire was the missing piece in the puzzle. Like cattle we had been herded into the corral, and the gate had been barred behind us. The Jewish section was sealed. Despair swept over us like a cloud, blotting out all hope. This, then, was the fate that had been reserved for us—to be locked up there, our houses taken away, our means of support inaccessible, and left to starve or to perish from the diseases that accompany overcrowded conditions.”

The city authorities and the *Judenrat* particularly were charged with the task of supervising the exchange of apartments between Jews and non-Jews who had to leave the Ghetto, so that when the Ghetto officially was closed, not a single Jew would remain outside its walls.

Following are descriptions of the scenes on the streets of Warsaw, taken from the *Gazeta Zydowska*, the Jewish newspaper published twice and later three times a week in Krakow in the Polish language under strict Nazi control:

“Throngs of people are gathered in front of the display posts to get the latest news and to study the map of the new Ghetto. Every one has a question to ask and every one needs advice. The walls of the houses are covered with cards announcing available apartments. This is the cheapest and the most popular way of advertising. Business is conducted right there on the spot.

“The entire city is on the move. With the breaking of dawn, the streets are filled with moving vans, large and small, carriages, automobiles. These are overloaded with furniture, luggage, parcels and mountains of bedding. There is a ceaseless procession of moving vans. They come from all sides and follow all directions. It looks as though all roads are in a state of confusion and that all travelers had lost their way. This will last another day or two until everyone reaches his destination and the borderline will divide man from man.

“Across the street from the synagogue the Kehillah opened a clearing house for apartments. Near the office there is a little coffee house. Its walls are now covered with thousands of cards all of the same content: I am changing from the Aryan district to the Jewish district. I have an apartment, a store, a shop; address and size of the place are given in detail. One hears: ‘Do you know what a beautiful apartment I have?’ a Jewish woman is saying. ‘It is sunny and clean.’ ‘But it is not cleaner than mine,’ replies a Christian woman. ‘How much do you pay for yours?’ Then both women leave the crowd in order to strike a bargain in private.”

On November 16, 1940 the Ghetto was closed without any special warning. It was surrounded by a wall eight feet high covered with

pieces of broken glass. Eleven gates led to the Ghetto and no Jew was permitted to leave it without a special permit. The exits were guarded by German, Polish and Jewish police. The Ghetto was so overcrowded that ten to twelve persons had to live in one room. Nearly half a million Jews were thrust into one large prison to live in congestion, squalor and terror. In November, 1940 began a new chapter in the life of the Jews in Warsaw. The process of extermination, starvation, torture and brutal treatment entered upon a new phase.

The *Gazeta Zydowska* gives an account of the spirit of the Jewish population:

"The Jewish community and especially the Jews of Warsaw are going through a period of trial. With the creation of the Jewish District more than 100,000 Jews were forced to move. This requires a great deal of effort, help and most of all, presence of mind. Every one who is to remain where he is must help those who are forced to move. This help must be organized and must be practical. Those who seek help must confront a human, brotherly heart.

"Suffering makes men noble, purifies them, hardens them. During all the periods of tribulations in our history, the most beautiful human traits revealed themselves. In those times the Jew was prepared for self-sacrifice. Now, too, the Jews in many cities have demonstrated a great deal of sacrifice for their brethren in need. We must guard our national responsibility within every one of us. In times of trial like the present we must get out of the depths of the Jewish soul the most noble feelings and qualities which constitute the glory of our national life."

NAZI EXPLANATION OF GHETTO DECREE

The official explanation given by the Nazis for their decree of October 16, 1940, establishing the Warsaw Ghetto, was that it was a measure to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. This was only a pretext. Behind the decree was the preconceived program for segregating the Jews from the rest of the population in order to have them conveniently at hand for future measures.

Half a million Jews were herded into a small area where before the outbreak of the war was a population of 150,000 to 160,000. Later, when many Jews driven out of smaller towns came to Warsaw, they swelled the population of the Ghetto to about 600,000. It was a district of some of Warsaw's worst slums, and many of the houses there had been ruined by bombardment in September 1939.

The pamphlet, *Tale of a City*, published by the Office of War Information in Washington, describes the Ghetto:

"Before the policy of total extermination went into effect more than half a million Jews were packed into the Ghetto, a dismal section of 100 blocks in the northern part of Warsaw, surrounded by an 8-foot wall topped by broken glass. No one could enter or leave without a pass. No street cars ran between the Ghetto and other parts of the city.

"Former warehouses and loft buildings, without adequate sanitary facilities, were turned into dwelling places, 30 to 40 persons living in one office room. There was only one hospital in the Ghetto, without linen and with few drugs. Carts went through the Ghetto streets at night to pick up the dead left lying there.

"Germans maintained a bicycle guard around the Ghetto wall, constantly circling in search of persons who had left without permission. Some months ago Nazi soldiers caught a small boy who was returning to the Ghetto with a bag of food; lifting a manhole cover, they dropped the boy into a sewer. The Nazis were proud of the conditions they had created in the Ghetto. Regular tours passed through its twisted, somber streets, the sightseers being Germans who had settled in Poland or been brought there from bombed areas in the Reich. Poles were often forced to take these tours too, but they utilized them to make mental note of persons suffering worse than others. Later they threw small packages of food over the Ghetto wall near those spots."

THE GHETTO AS SEEN THROUGH GERMAN EYES

In *Die Deutsche Polizei* (August 1941) Walter Doering describes his visit to the Ghetto and the scenes he witnessed there in an article entitled *Blick in ein Judenghetto*. It is a vivid portrait, presenting the persecutor as clearly as the victims:

"Wherever we looked we saw Jews. And what figures! Filthy, ragged, and with an expression in which a perpetual grin mingled with hesitation and uncertainty. The stores in the streets resemble caverns and holes. They were thick with dirt. The deeper we went into the Ghetto, the more dismal it became. The streets grew narrower; the dirty houses with their filthy windows without curtains, became smaller. In the rooms which were on the ground floor the Jews had hung cardboard or newspapers over the windows so that one should not be able to look into their filthy stables."

When Doering gets to the market-place he again notes contemptu-

ously the rags that the Jews are wearing, and the sorry wares they are offering for sale—old shoes, used suspenders, worn jackets, matches, etc.:

“There a couple of Jewesses are scolding over a few potatoes; here some Jew-boys fight over a cigarette butt. Wherever we looked, we saw miserable, fallen creatures.”

His final sentence is: “*Moegen Sie in Ibrem Dreck ersticken!—uns soll es recht sein.*” (Let them choke in their filth,—it’s all right with us.)

CONGESTION AND LACK OF SANITATION

According to official statistics, the number of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto on January 1, 1941 was 378,979. During the year 1941 some 70,000 Jews came into the Ghetto from the smaller communities mainly on the left side of the Vistula to the West of Warsaw, and another 44,000 from other towns, besides the Jews deported from Belgium and Germany. Most of the new arrivals were physically and mentally broken, and many of them had to travel in the bitter cold under the most harrowing conditions.

The congestion in the Ghetto assumed enormous proportions; for example, in the building of 35 Nalewki Street there were 1,882 Jews; at 17 Krochmalna Street there were 1,029, and at 3 Bagno Street there were 1,016 inhabitants. According to the statistics of the Warsaw City Council, the average for the end of 1941 was 14 people to a room. The Ghetto had 1,692 buildings of which 1,359 were residences; 162 were entirely destroyed by bombardment, 81 were factories or warehouses, and the rest were wooden shacks.

The Ghetto boundaries were drawn so as to exclude all playgrounds and the only park in the Jewish section—the so-called Krasinski Park—was declared to be outside the Ghetto limits and entry to the Jews was forbidden. Fresh air became a commodity for sale: wherever there was a tree or two near a house, the owner placed a bench close by and charged a fee for sitting on it.

The lack of sanitation and the congestion caused the rapid spread of epidemics in the Ghetto. According to official German figures, out of 17,800 cases of spotted typhus in Warsaw in 1941, the Ghetto accounted for 15,749.

The epidemics, especially typhus, wrought havoc in the Ghetto. The special health council of the Jewish community had no adequate supply of medicaments for fighting the disease. Whole blocks in the Ghetto were fenced off with barbed wire, and behind the wire hungry people

waited with lustreless eyes for a little food to be brought to them and for the time when they would be released from their quarantine.

The Germans did not permit medical supplies to be brought into the Ghetto and there was a woeful lack of anti-typhus injections and other serums. No medicaments could be bought in the open market, and the Jewish hospitals had been looted by the Germans of all medical supplies. The *Judemat* had to wrangle with the German authorities for every ounce of medicine or serum.

STARVATION FOOD RATIONS

By starving the Jewish population the Germans contributed greatly towards the spread of contagious diseases in the Ghetto. Three types of ration cards were introduced in Poland; one for the Germans, another for the Poles, a third for the Jews. The Poles could obtain half as much food as the Germans, the Jews half as much as the Poles. In practice, however, the Jews obtained even less food than was provided for in the ration cards. By the end of 1941 the Jews received no fats or sugar and of all the articles they were entitled to they could in fact get only bread and potatoes. During the early months of 1941 they could still get saccharine and substitutes for fats, but even those things later became unavailable.

Rations for the first week in January 1941 were: sugar, Aryans 16 ounces, Jews $\frac{4}{5}$ of an ounce; fruit juice, Aryans only; soap, Aryans only, one tablet and one packet of soap powder.

During the first half of 1941 the Jews received 3 oz. of bread daily, but even bread was not available every day. They received no sugar, butter, eggs, fat or vegetables. Jewish children did not get any milk.

Poland Fights of August 15, 1941 printed a letter from Poland about the conditions in the Warsaw Ghetto: "The Jews are entitled to 6 lbs. of bread monthly, just a little over 3 oz. a day. But the right to buy this small quantity of bread means nothing in reality, for we are never able to obtain it. For the past two months we have not seen a loaf of bread. No other food is available. We are actually starving. A 2 lb. loaf of bread costs 30 zlotys, \$1.20 on the illegal market, whereas the official bread—which we cannot obtain—costs only 10 cents for a 2 lb. loaf."

The *Vaestmanlanda Tidningen*, a Swedish newspaper, revealed in August 1941, that "The Nazis in Warsaw have issued an order prohibiting Jews in the Ghetto from eating vegetables. Jewish homes are

being raided in order to ascertain whether vegetables are consumed there.”

The Germans issued an order on February 22, 1941, prohibiting the sale of any merchandise to Jews outside of the Ghetto under penalty of a fine of 1,000 zlotys, or three months in jail and forced labor. In the case of minors between the ages of 7 and 14 selling goods to Jews outside the Ghetto walls, their parents were held responsible.

Most Jews could not afford to buy food on the black market, and often could not find enough money to buy the food permitted by the ration cards. They had to pay for their food by their labor. During the early part of 1941 the Warsaw Jews received small amounts of potatoes and vegetables sent to the Jewish community by the *balutzim* farm at Grochow, near Warsaw. Later the Germans closed down the farm. In the Ghetto proper the Jews utilized every inch of ground in the courtyards of the houses to plant vegetables. Jewish young men and women cultivated 450 vacant lots, where they planted potatoes, cabbages, lettuce, radishes, tomatoes and onions. Vegetables were planted even in the Jewish cemetery on Gesia Street. Radishes and onions were also planted in flower pots and boxes on the window sills. The amount of food yielded in this manner was naturally negligible, but the fact illustrates the terrible hunger that prevailed in the Ghetto.

The Polish population received at the end of 1941, according to the ration cards: 95 deka (about 2 lb.) of bread weekly, one egg per month and about 3 oz. of sugar once every few months. In theory the Poles received about 3 oz. of meat per week, but no fats. From time to time the Poles would receive very small portions of marmalade. Of these rations the Jews were entitled in theory to about 50%, but in fact they received only bread and potatoes.

The Jewish population starved. In 1941, 80 Jewish soup-kitchens handed out 120,000 meals every day. The children's soup-kitchens of the Centos handed out 35,000 meals daily for the famished Jewish children. But these soup-kitchens could not solve the food problem of the population. The meal at the soup-kitchen, for thousands of Jews almost their only meal during the day, consisted of a plate of thin soup with a small morsel of bread.

Some foodstuffs were smuggled into the Ghetto, but the price was unusually high and within the reach of only a few individuals, those who had articles of clothing or jewelry to sell. The prices of food in the Ghetto were much higher than in the "Aryan" sections of Warsaw. According to the *Polish Fortnightly Review* (December 1, 1942) published by the Polish Ministry of Information in London, at the begin-

ning of 1942 the price of bread inside the Ghetto was 80 to 85 zlotys a kilogram ($2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.) while outside the Ghetto it was 8 to 12 zlotys a kilogram; sugar was 400 to 450 zlotys a kilogram in the Ghetto and 35 to 70 zlotys a kilogram outside; potatoes were 16 to 30 zlotys a kilogram in the Ghetto and 350 outside.

The smugglers were chiefly small Jewish children who risked their lives to obtain food for their families by stealing out of the Ghetto at dawn or late at night. Hundreds of them were shot dead by the Nazis when caught on the Ghetto walls or outside the Ghetto.

A Pole who escaped from Poland in 1942 reports that "the smuggling of food is carried on in many different ways. Holes are made in the Ghetto walls to bring in food. Children climb up to the tops of the walls to catch food packages thrown to them. When the Nazis catch the children, they shoot them on the spot. The streets are full of hungry Jewish children begging for bread. Many of them sleep in the ruined houses. Before I escaped from Warsaw the Germans caught about thirty Jewish children trying to steal out of the Ghetto and publicly drowned them in the water of the lime pits on Okopowa Street."

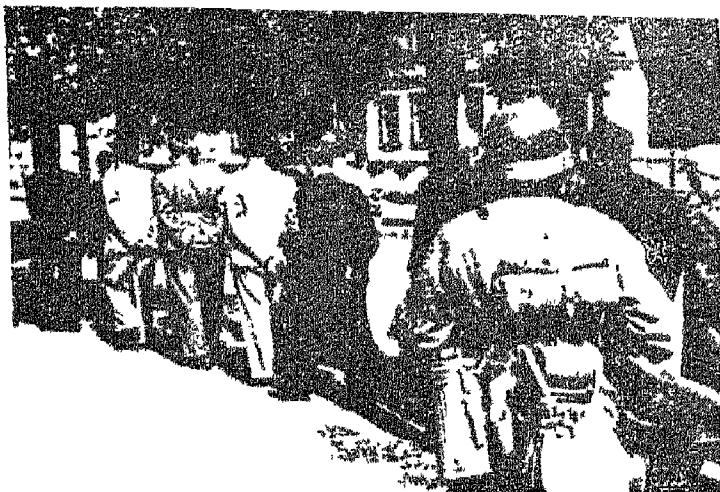
Another refugee from Poland reports that the Germans officially authorized the addition of 33% sawdust to the bread. The *Nowy Kurjer Warszawski* which is under Nazi control, carried advertisements by bakeries requiring 3 or 4 tons of sawdust. People became sick from eating bread thus made.

Mr. Adam Sokolski, a Polish-American who returned to the United States in the second half of 1942 after spending several years in Warsaw, stated that the friendly attitude of the Poles towards the Jews is evidenced by their treatment of Jewish children who steal out of the Ghetto to beg for food. The children are careful to avoid the houses of Germans where they are likely to be turned over to the Gestapo, but they never leave a Polish house empty-handed.

The Nazis seek to stop this traffic on the pretext that the children might spread epidemics. Mr. Sokolski himself once witnessed the murder of a Jewish child by a Gestapo agent on Zelazna Street, when the tall, broad-shouldered Gestapo agent noticed a lean, emaciated 8 year-old Jewish beggar in the crowd. He collared the boy but the child wrenched himself out of the Nazi's hold and made a quick dash. The Nazi immediately whipped out his revolver and aimed at the child's shoulders. Soon a shrill cry was heard and the child's lifeless body lay in a pool of blood. The Gestapo agent smiled with satisfaction, calmly put his revolver back in its holster and walked on with his head raised



AGED JEWS FORCED TO SWEEP THE STREETS
IN A GALICIAN VILLAGE



JEWS SIEZED FOR FORCED LABOR



GROUP OF JEWISH INTELLECTUALS BEING TAKEN
TO GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS



JEW S AT FORCED LABOR



JEWISH YOUTH AT FORCED LABOR

high, without even looking at his victim. The crowd did not dare to stop him.

JEWISH SELF-HELP

During the summer of 1941, 88 soup-kitchens were operating in Warsaw, but by the early part of 1942 their number had increased to 145. The number of children's kitchens rose from 35 to 45 by the early part of 1942. Special kitchens were open also for the employees of Jewish communal institutions, the members of the Jewish police and the Jews employed in forced labor. 135,000 bowls of soup were given out daily during most of the year 1942. In addition some 60,000 plates of soup were given out to the sick and to the aged people and small children who could not come to the soup-kitchens.

To further alleviate the hunger to some extent cooperative kitchens were established for the inhabitants of the larger houses, and soup-kitchens for the inhabitants of several blocks. By the early part of April 1941 there were 212 such collective kitchens feeding some 14,000 inhabitants. Some of these kitchens prepared 300 meals daily.

In all soup-kitchens the beneficiaries were not only the old, the sick and the children, but many of those who were only partially employed. The most urgent concern of the Jewish population was to feed its children whose physical condition, as a result of starvation, had induced a feeling of profound despair in the community.

GHETTO SCENES

A letter written by a Jewish woman in Warsaw in May 1941 which found its way to New York, describes the general atmosphere in Warsaw during that time: "We have no cheerful news. One drags out an animal existence and one cannot even think. It would not do any good, anyway. After running around all day, I feel happy in the evening to have my own corner with a bed. One runs around all day only to be able to forget one's troubles. There is little employment to be had, and there is so much want that one could work day and night to satisfy it; but even that would be of no avail. The best thing would be not to walk out on the street and not to see anything. Sometimes, I think that my brother (who lost his sight in the bombardment of Warsaw) is better off than I am, since his heart is not torn each time he sees it all."

Das Reich, the weekly edited by Dr. Joseph Goebbels, in its issue of March 9, 1941 had an article by Hubert Neun, in which he writes

the following about Warsaw: "The Jews, who as late as last winter made up a large proportion of the street population, have now disappeared. The old Warsaw Ghetto has been enlarged with the addition of a few more streets, and has now become the segregated Jewish section whose communication and contact with the rest of the city is under complete control. It is not possible to ascertain exactly whether the number of the Jews living in the Ghetto is 400,000 or 500,000.

"Street vendors offer to sell anything which comes into their hands: Polish newspapers and Hebrew books, onions, bread, old clothes, torn socks and articles of furniture. Some carry full bags on their shoulders, others offer the prescribed arm-bands with the Zion insignia for sale."

Victor M. Bienstock of the Overseas News Agency who arrived in New York from Lisbon in the early part of 1942, published his impressions based on reliable information he had obtained from official and private sources. He wrote:

"Nearly one-third of the Jews in the Ghetto wear torn clothes which offer no protection from the cold. Over three-quarters of the Jewish population is very weak and ailing as a result of the lack of proper food. This is a situation which breeds typhus, cholera, spotted typhus, dysentery and other diseases which are also the result of inhuman living conditions. The Jews receive no disinfectants, except the very small quantities which the *Judenrat* gets now and then from the German authorities. There is a danger that the epidemic will spread beyond the demarcation line.

"Medicines and medical supplies are almost non-existent. The living conditions are appalling, and 10 to 15 persons live in one room.

"German detachments continually search Jewish dwellings and systematically confiscate pillows, blankets, underwear and other household effects in order to equip the new hospitals which they established for the wounded soldiers on the Eastern front.

"The problem of food in the Warsaw Ghetto is beyond all imagination. On the streets of the Ghetto one does not see any stout people at all. Every one is thin, pale and emaciated. One also sees Jews whose bodies are partly swollen. No one walks fast; no one has the necessary energy for it. Every day there are Jews who collapse on the street exhausted from hunger.

"The small sums for the relief of the hungry hardly suffices even for a few of the hungry and the sick.

"The food packages arriving from abroad have kept many thousands of Jews alive. They sold the packages in the market for high prices and

bought potatoes for that money, at 8 zlotys a kilogram. Potatoes are the main food in the Ghetto and are not easily obtainable.

"The Germans distribute 60 gram of bread daily among the Jews. The bread is of the poorest quality, black and hard, mixed with sawdust.

"In recent months the Germans rounded up young Jews for forced labor which means death from exhaustion. The thousands of Jews caught on the streets never saw their families again. In November 1941, when my informants left Warsaw, Jews were caught in large numbers, young and old and even children, and pressed into labor for building a new military airdrome near Warsaw. A large number of them perished at work, unable to stand the cold and the exhaustion."

Tale of a City, the pamphlet published by the Office of War Information, gives an account of the food situation in Warsaw, in the Ghetto and outside: "Bread is about the only thing the Poles can count upon eating; they have been permitted less than five slices a day. This winter there may be no bread for Poles in Warsaw. Forty percent sawdust, the bread is dark and indigestible. Many families are subsisting on a thin potato soup without meat and containing a few cabbage leaves and beets. Food cards theoretically entitle the Poles each week to slightly more than three ounces of meat (the equivalent in the United States, say, of one thin chop), each month to three-and-a-half ounces of marmalade, and one egg. They rarely receive these. Meat, when sold, is malodorous and mostly bone. No provision is made on the food cards for butter, cheese or green vegetables. Adults may not receive milk, an adult being anybody older than six months.

"Death from starvation was common in the Ghetto, rations being little over half those allotted to Poles outside the Ghetto. Furthermore, Ghetto rations were the first to be reduced. Seeking food outside the Ghetto, bands of boys crept through holes in bombed buildings and emerged from cellars and excavations. They roamed the streets of Warsaw, begging."

Guido Puccio, political correspondent of the Fascist *La Tribuna* of Rome, visited the Warsaw Ghetto about the second half of 1941, accompanied by some Gestapo agents. Following are his impressions published in *La Tribuna*: "Our cars halted before a barrier. One has the impression of being at a railway crossing. German soldiers mount guard. We are before one of the entrances to the house of Israel. At a certain point I was assailed by the fear that the air itself must be infected and that I might carry away the germs of who knows what contagious diseases. I could not refrain from asking: How is it that cholera has not yet broken out here?"

"The Jews seem to have immunized themselves against dirt and disease. Spotted fever, for instance, which almost always kills Aryans, very rarely succeeds in sending a Jew to the next world.

"On the sidewalk a corpse was lying. Nobody seemed to notice it; people were walking all around, passing the cadaver, almost touching it. It seemed to be a phenomenon to which they are accustomed. Men and women crouched on the ground before heaps of things which one could with greatest difficulty describe as merchandise. It was very hard to guess what was being sold there. The place, however, was filled with people. The sight of them was extremely depressing.

"I feel the need to tell my readers as well as myself, why, before such a terrible sight, neither I nor others [meaning his Nazi comrades] were moved. Your heart should explode, and instead you remain indifferent. Had I become callous, unfeeling? No, but all ties of human solidarity have been cut off. And through no fault of ours, only because of their hatred and hostility."

Asked how the Jews managed to communicate with the outside, the Nazi apologist said: "No matter how closely we watch them, it is not sufficient. One day we discovered big holes in the walls which enclose the Ghetto. Who could do that? For what purpose? We found out finally that a Jew had hired a gang of boys, who at night crept like rats through the holes, went to the city to sell hidden foodstuffs and brought other goods into the Ghetto."

Under the caption "Horrors," Puccio describes the "immense ditches dug in the yellow ground of the Jewish cemetery. There, crowded one against the other, like sardines, were buried the corpses of common people. Here probably will be the last resting place of that Jew whom we saw lying dead on the sidewalk of the Ghetto. I had enough, I could not stand it any longer. Tonight, my readers, I will have to take at least ten glasses of vodka to forget, to give my spirit a powerful push towards less gruesome impressions. I will need it badly."

The wife of R., an American citizen who died in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1941, was compelled to remain there until April 1942, when the necessary arrangements to leave were made for her by her American friends. She arrived in this country by way of Portugal in June 1942. In an interview with the *Nasza Trybuna* (issue of June 26, 1942), she reported the following: "Officially the Jews in the Ghetto receive 2 kilograms of bread monthly, 25 dekas of marmalade ersatz, or honey ersatz, one piece of soap and 10 dekas of sugar. As a matter of fact, however, the Jews receive only 2 kilos of bread monthly, a little marmalade and sometimes 10 dekas of sugar. With the exception of a very small num-

ber of Jews who can afford to buy other food articles in the open market, Jews are swollen from hunger and are a constant prey to diseases. The few fortunate ones who still have something to sell, buy food in the open market, which has been smuggled into the Ghetto. In the open market a pound of butter is sold for 110 zlotys; 2½ lbs. of potatoes sell for 4 zlotys; 2½ lbs. of kasha sell at 2.50 zlotys; a small bundle of carrots at 220 zlotys.

"The free soup-kitchens which give out bowls of soup manage to keep the hungry masses of the Jews alive. The number of soup-kitchens is insufficient compared to the tens of thousands of the needy."

In December 1941 the Polish scholar, Dr. Witold Majewski, who had been twice thrown into prison by the Gestapo in Eastern Galicia but managed to escape, arrived in Palestine. In the Polish Consulate there, Dr. Majewski, who had visited the Warsaw Ghetto three times before his escape from Poland, gave the representatives of the press his impressions of the Ghetto. The Palestine publication of the Polish refugees, *Gazeta Polska*, in reporting his remarks, said: "The arrival of Dr. Witold Majewski, the well-known Orientalist, has been noted for some time by official Polish circles. His material has been thoroughly checked with the material and reports of others who managed to escape from Poland."

Following is the report of Dr. Majewski as given in *Gazeta Polska* of December 1941: "I was in the Ghetto three times. I had permission to visit it as a physician. The entrance into the Ghetto is under the control of German and Polish police; the interior is supervised by Jewish police. The Warsaw street cars stop 60 or 70 meters from the gates of the Ghetto. When they pass the streets of the Ghetto, the cars dash through so swiftly that no one is able to jump off. Typhus and other epidemics rage in the Ghetto. Children under 3 years of age and adults over 45 may not receive medical attention in the Ghetto. Jews receive half the food which the Poles receive. The Poles receive 100 grams of bread daily, the Jews receive 100 grams by ration cards every other day. Sometimes kasha is given out, but not regularly—everything is accidental. The children in the Ghetto are worse off. Sometimes a bottle of milk is pushed through the sewer pipes near the Ghetto walls. Food is smuggled through the walls in many different ways. In the face of death by hunger, the Jews risk their lives to obtain a morsel of bread."

The *East London Observer* of February 27, 1942, published some extracts from a letter written by a Jewish woman living in the Ghetto: "I was lucky the other day because I got some potatoes. For three weeks

we had no heat and I burned several pieces of my furniture to cook the potatoes. We had a potato a day each, and they tasted delicious. . . . We also had some soup. The dog had brought home a bone; of this we made soup. How often I envy the dog! Fats we have none. The children saw neither milk nor butter for many weeks. They sometimes get a warm meal from the community kitchen. We used the grease which we used to put on our boots for cooking, but now this too is finished."

Tosia Bialer writes in *Collier's*, February 20, 1943: "The most vital problem for us was food. During those long months the word on every person's lips, the thought in every mind, was food—where to get it, how to get it, how much was there. For food a man would take the most fearful risks, would incur the most frightful punishment.

"Because nothing could be grown in the Ghetto every bit of food had to be brought in from outside. An Office of Provisions was set up within the Jewish Council to receive what the Germans allotted to us and distribute it to the retailers. Our official bread ration was five pounds a month per person. The flour was dark and sticky while the bread made from it tasted like turnips and was indigestible.

"The diet forced upon us was calculated to starve us. It contained no fats, no eggs, no meat or fish, no fruits or vegetables, and was, therefore, almost completely lacking in calories and vitamins.

"Naturally in these circumstances we took matters into our own hands. A black market sprang up, supplied by organized smuggling, and this enabled us to keep from starving to death. The smugglers were tough characters, reckless and unafraid. The penalty if caught was death, but there were always replacements to be found for their depleted ranks.

"The majority of the Ghetto population lived on a monstrous and unprecedented sell-out. We consumed whatever substance was left. Those who still had money spent it. By far the greater part had nothing but the valuables they had been able to carry away with them. These we sold one by one so that we could eat.

"Small children would creep through holes in the brickwork or climb over and jump down. Once on the outside they would run away on their errands. They were thoroughly familiar with every winding street and back alley through which they sped with their burdens. Those who had no valuables left sold their last miserable belongings out on the sidewalks before their lodgings or hawked them through the streets. When these were gone, they sold their last strength to menial services for a meal, for a piece of food. And those who had no more strength, died.

"As 1941 drew to an end, our long sufferings began to tell on us.

Our resistance was waning, for we never at any time had enough to eat. It was impossible for the haphazard business of smuggling entirely to replace the regular channels of supplying a city with food under normal conditions. What came in was always too little, and even that quantity grew less as the German net became tighter. There were tens of thousands of families who could not afford black-market prices and had to depend on the rationed goods for subsistence. Slow victims of undernourishment, these. Their teeth decayed and fell out, hair and nails refused to grow, their eyes became great sunken hollows in fleshless faces, and their stomachs were repulsively bloated. These miserable travesties of human beings picked up what they could find in the streets and in garbage piles, consuming the rest of their strength in the awful fight against real starvation."

THE INCREASE IN MORTALITY

Hunger and unsanitary conditions caused by congestion resulted in an alarming spread of epidemic diseases and an appalling rise in mortality among the Jews in the Ghetto. The lack of daily articles of food, the lack of milk and vitamins, claimed many thousands of victims among Jewish children. Jewish workmen who returned from forced labor camps were terribly exhausted and hundreds of them died.

The governor of the Warsaw district, Fischer, declared in a speech: "We will destroy that breed. They will disappear through hunger and want. The Polish people will be grateful to us and of the Jewish question only a cemetery will remain."

The pamphlet *Tale of a City* says: "Inside the Ghetto, the Germans systematically created an escalator of death; when 500 Jews died, 500 others immediately took their places, shipped into the Ghetto from various parts of Poland and Europe. During April, May and June 1941, 10,232 Jews died in the Ghetto. The annual death rate in the Ghetto in 1941 was roughly 83 per thousand; the highest annual death rate of any modern city is less than 30 per thousand."

Ten percent of the Jewish population in Warsaw died in 1941; that is the figure published by the German authorities in occupied Poland. Of the 450,000 Jews in Warsaw, 44,630 died from typhus and other diseases in 1941. That figure does not include the victims of the mass executions.

The following is the officially published list of deaths caused by disease and hunger in the Ghetto during the year 1941: January—900, February—1,023, March—1,668, April—2,655, May—5,821, June—

4,290, July—5,550, August—5,560, September—7,545, October—4,614, November—4,841, December—4,966; total for the year, 44,630.

According to other information about 70,000 Jews in Warsaw died of hunger, disease and maltreatment in 1941.

A Pole who fled to Russia in 1942 relates that Governor Hans Frank ordered that there be no decrease in the number of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, so that when several thousand Jews die others from other towns are brought in to fill their places.

In October 1941 Polish government circles received information that mortality was rising in the Warsaw Ghetto. According to the information, the Ghetto was supplied with 200 coffins daily.

The *New York Post* of December 20, 1941, published the following cable from Stockholm: "More than 1,000 victims in the densely crowded Warsaw Ghetto have been put to death by gas in a new move by the Nazi military authorities to check an epidemic of the dread disease which has spread throughout the Eastern front area."

The *East London Observer* of March 20, 1942 stated that the ashes of 14 Warsaw rabbis who died in the concentration camp of Oswiecim had already been sent to their families.

An eye-witness account of how Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto were dying of starvation in the street was brought to London by a Polish doctor who succeeded in escaping from Nazi-occupied Poland to London, and published in the *News Chronicle* of July 6, 1942. The story reveals that death from hunger has become a common occurrence among the Jews in the Ghetto: "I saw with my own eyes nine Jews lying against the wall of a corner house at Franciszkanska and Nalewki Streets in the last throes of death from starvation," the escaped doctor said.

"At first, when a man or a woman fell to the pavements of the Warsaw Ghetto from hunger, people tried to do something to help the victims, but now there are so many Jewish corpses on the street that people avert their eyes and pass by.

"Around those nine dying Jews, a group of emaciated children were cowering, waiting for the victims to die so that they could strip the bodies of their clothes, especially the shoes."

Victor B. Bienstock, the correspondent of the Overseas News Agency, reported on January 19, 1942: "According to information received here, over 400 Jews died every day in Warsaw from cold, hunger and diseases. This figure is as of November 1941 when winter began its death march among the starved population, which was entirely unequipped for the severe frosts.

"Because of the high mortality there are no private funerals in the Ghetto and hundreds of the dead are buried in mass-graves. It often happens that the corpses lie on the streets for days, covered only by old newspapers. Sanitary detachments take them away and carry them five or six at a time in a wheelbarrow. There were cases when common graves were dug for over one thousand dead."

Dr. Majewski stated in the *Gazeta Polska* of Jerusalem: "I visited the inferno of the Warsaw Ghetto two and a half months ago three times. There is appalling poverty in the Ghetto and people go around hungry and in tatters. On every street are to be found collections of coffins—in fact mere boards—for carrying the dead to the cemetery. Those boards must be paid for, but most people cannot afford the money for the payment. While walking through the streets of the Ghetto I saw groups of dead, five to seven in a group, lying on the ground. I saw boys of 10 years of age literally breathing their last from hunger, living corpses. I also saw photographs of such scenes in the German illustrated magazines, *Berliner Illustrierte* and *Muenchener Illustrierte*. In these pictures one sees dying Jews lying on the streets of the Ghetto while people go in and out of the neighboring houses without paying any attention to the dying. The inscriptions under those pictures were as follows: 'When one Jew dies, the others do not even look at him.' It may be that they don't look, because they are themselves faced with such death.

"What I am telling here is not an exaggeration. It is too inadequate a picture of the conditions. There are no words which can describe that inferno."

Mrs. R., who left the Warsaw Ghetto in April 1942, tells the following in the June 26th, 1942 issue of *Nasza Trybuna*, the Polish-Jewish periodical published in New York, "My last recollection is of April 4, 1942 when a Gestapo car took me to the Pawiak prison where I had to remain for a month, together with other American citizens interned there. At a certain moment the car stopped at Leszno Street because the road was blocked by a Jewish corpse. I shall never forget that scene; it was a mere skeleton covered with the skin of a man who had died of hunger and exhaustion.

"I often saw Jews on the street who died of hunger or disease.

"According to absolutely reliable information, 300 Jews die in Warsaw every day. They are buried in common graves. Most Jews die of typhus, tuberculosis and hunger. Among those who drag their way on the streets some give the impression of living corpses.

"Can you picture to yourselves children with faces of old men or women, without hair or without teeth? Such children are to be seen quite frequently. The faces are shriveled up, the hair and the teeth fall out because of undernourishment."

Tosia Bialer writes in *Collier's*, February 27, 1943: "The Germans began to hunt our men in the street. They were caught like animals and carried away to slave at back-breaking jobs in the outside town. Late at night they were brought back and dumped inside the gates, drained of all strength. The less hardy never did return. We did not let our men go out on the streets unless it was absolutely necessary, and then they were preceded by a woman who would give a warning whenever she sighted the Gestapo.

"One morning in 1941 we woke up to find a number of Jews lying dead in Kupiecka Street. They had been caught outside the wall and the Germans had shot them where they found them and thrown the bodies into the Ghetto. We never knew what business they had been engaged on or whether they had passes or not. The Germans were not troubled by little technicalities like that; they shot first and did not bother to ask questions after.

"In December the wall moved again, this time to exclude the Jewish cemetery from the Ghetto.

"Too much smuggling, said the Germans, had been going on through the cemetery enclosure, which bordered on an ancient part of the city. From then on, in order to bury our dead and visit their graves, we had to obtain a special pass. One lane was left open and a gate set up for the burial carts and pedestrians to pass through the wall to the cemetery. The coffins were not permitted to be nailed down before reaching the gate. Grim scenes occurred there when the carts were stopped by the guards before rattling through. The lids would be ordered taken off the coffins, and the guards would poke about inside with their bayonets, searching for contraband. There were often a number of corpses in one large coffin, and from this they would be tumbled in a grotesque heap of tangled arms and legs, white skin and bones, naked and miserable, like a caricature of Rubens' Last Judgment. This was death without tears, without dignity.

"The Ghetto had become a haunted town full of weird sights and unreal shapes. Death reigned in every home and on every street, was on every person's lips.

"Everywhere undertaking establishments had sprung up, covering the entire Ghetto, filthy little shops providing miserable coffins crudely

put together. The carts that carried them to the gate were pushed or drawn by relatives of the dead. There were no horses to pull them.

"It is a gruesome feeling to walk along an unlighted street at night and suddenly stumble against something which had once been a human being but is now a corpse, rotting on the pavement covered with a few newspapers held down by bricks.

"There were many of those piles in the streets that winter. They would lie there until the garbage truck passed on its round, often at irregular intervals."

The *East London Observer* of February 27, 1942 reprinted some extracts from a letter written by a Jewish woman living in the Warsaw Ghetto: "Nuchim (the husband) has not returned. As you know, he disappeared. Whether he was killed, I do not know, but he did not come home. Shlome (the eldest son) was taken where 30,000 others are (concentration camp Oswiecim). His ashes were sent back and I paid postage for them. Salke and Mirel are no more with us. I could not go to their funeral, because the other two, Aaron and Nuchimshe, were very ill. If I had more food, they would possibly still be with us. It was no good calling in the doctor. I saw them getting thinner day by day until they were taken to the Gesia Cemetery."

The *London News Chronicle* of May 1942 printed some details brought by a Jewish woman who escaped to Palestine from the Warsaw Ghetto. Together with her 4 year-old daughter she managed to flee the city of Kaluszyn in Central Poland and finally reached Warsaw where she secured employment in one of the Ghetto soup-kitchens. 10,000 Jews died monthly in the Ghetto, she estimated. She saw undertakers' vans scour the city all day collecting emaciated bodies from which all clothing had been stripped, and transporting them to cemeteries where they were buried 3 deep in mass graves. Orphaned children with spindly legs and famine-bloated bodies roamed the Ghetto streets begging food, but nobody had much to give them. It had become almost commonplace, she said, to see children and adults fall dead from starvation in the streets. Scores of people commit suicide every day.

The *Social Demokraten* of Stockholm quoted an account of Warsaw which was published in the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*. A German journalist describes a common grave and burial in the Ghetto. The grave is a ditch, 30 yards by 20 yards, containing naked bodies of men, women and children. The Jewish grave-diggers work in a hurry, as the death toll in the Ghetto is enormous. Therefore it often happens that a head, hand or leg sticks out of the grave. The German journalist says that

there are many cases where corpses are left in the streets because of poverty, and the police bury them in a common grave. The *Social Demokraten* adds that it would be very difficult to believe the above description were it not for the fact that it was published by a German journalist who had no pity for the Jews.

THE PENALTY FOR ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE

The brutality of the Germans towards the Jews who sought to escape the Ghetto is described in the following extract from an article by Marie Syrkin in the *Jewish Frontier*, November, 1942: "In *Trek der Juden* (No. 19 of *Die Deutsche Polizei*, October 1941) we get a particularly choice bit by a sergeant-major of the Police, Alfred Knauf. He describes a rainy April Sunday afternoon in Warsaw. Buds are beginning to appear, but the Poles stick in their holes and apartments because of the bad weather. 'Only our countrymen are walking along in jolly groups, heedless of the rain. They go about merrily in their long raincoats and rubber boots. But the German policemen doing sentry duty on the bridge don't like it so well. It is a monotonous job. Autos with German soldiers roll past. The lads are lustily singing, *Wir lagen vor Madagascar*. But something queer comes creaking over the bridge to relieve the monotony—four wagons completely covered pulled by sorry looking nags. The dutiful soldiers halt the wagon. They lift the covers and what do they see? Jews, nothing but Jews, male and female, kith and kin, so lie the children of Israel, one on top of the other. Under them are bags and valises, bundles. To it clammers the Jew-spawn wrapped in a cloud of smell beside which garlic is pine-needle aroma.'

"With special grace, the author describes the Jews pleading with their captors. For verisimilitude he concocts a particular brand of vile German which supposedly issued from the mouths of Jews. 'Dear Sir, let us go, we will pay zlotys, how much?' But the guard, a sturdy Bavarian, knows how to silence the petitioners.

"The Jews are cross-examined. Where were they going? Samuel and Leo, Rebecca and Rachel, Goldbaum and Finkelstein try to give plausible explanations. Every last one of them was trying to escape from the Warsaw Ghetto. Trusting to the darkness and the bad weather, they had hoped to reach the Vistula.

"A sharp order is given. The wagons turn around. If the skinny horses don't pull fast enough, powerful fists help out. The Jews are being shipped back. Weeping and wailing don't help.

"At the police station there is much pleasurable excitement when

the Jew-trek is rounded up. The lads have seen a lot in this curious Warsaw, but never a whole Jewish caravan with all the trimmings. More than half a hundred Jews crept out of the wagons: 36 Jews, 14 Jewesses, and 16 children were the human cargo of the 4 wagons. . . . Here all Judah was represented. 66 Jews and each a type in himself—a marvelous find for a caricaturist.

"The Jews were stripped and searched for hidden money. Knauf chortles, 'We knew our Pappenheimer not from yesterday. Besides, we policemen in the East, particularly those stationed in the former Jewish center of Warsaw, have developed nimble fingers and good noses. We found everything under the sun but we had to work quickly when the filthy Hebraic hides were dragged in the light of a German station.'

"The sixty-six Jewish men, women and children were shipped back into the Ghetto. What fate befell them for trying to escape, Knauf does not bother to relate. We know that shooting is the customary penalty for attempted flight, but Knauf ends his jolly tale with the hilarious scene in the police station. 'The severe, but just sentence was executed on November 10, 1941, in the courtyard of the old military jail in Gesia Street in Warsaw Ghetto.'"

INTENSIFICATION OF SUFFERING

Following is an excerpt from a letter written by a Jewish woman in Poland whose close relatives were deported to an unknown destination or poisoned by gas: "Dear sister, my hands are trembling, I cannot write. Our minutes are numbered. God knows whether we shall ever see each other. I weep as I write. My children are desperate, they want to live. All bless you. If you don't hear from us, you will know that we are no longer alive."

A Jewish woman who left Poland in October, 1942, and arrived in Palestine in December of the same year reported to the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem: "I left the Warsaw Ghetto in May, 1941. At that time the situation there was already deteriorating daily. Hunger was raging and epidemics were spreading. Women used to swoon from hunger in the streets. Hundreds of Jews died of hunger. If anyone fell dead on the street he was merely covered with paper, and he would usually remain lying there for a few days. A movement began for fleeing the Ghetto, and many managed to escape with the help of Polish tramcar conductors.

"I ran away from the Ghetto. . . . I first went to Radom, then to Staszow, then I again visited the Ghetto where I had left a daughter.

My last visit to the Ghetto took place in December, 1942, when my son was already in a labor camp. Children and old people were sent to execution, while the able-bodied were sent to labor camps."

The *Polish Fortnightly Review* reported on December 1, 1942: "The mortality rate inside the Ghetto rose steadily month after month. This was due not only to the terrible need of the people, but to the harsh winters of 1940-41 and 1941-42, epidemics of spotted typhus and typhoid and tuberculosis. Every day dozens of bodies were found in the streets. In 1941 the mortality amounted to some 13% of the total population and during the first quarter of 1942 it amounted to over 15%. On the other hand, the birthrate fell almost to nothing. Nonetheless the population of the Warsaw Ghetto remained almost stable throughout all the period of its existence. Officially it was about 433,000, but in fact it fell to 370,000. The reason is that more Jews were continually being driven into the Ghetto from other countries, such as Germany and Holland, as well as from various smaller towns and places around Warsaw."

During the first quarter of 1940 a total of 3,117 Jewish funerals took place in Warsaw. During a similar period in 1939 the number was 1,158. In Warsaw in 1940 there were three funeral establishments in operation. Because of lack of linen the rabbis authorized the use of paper shrouds. The funerals took place mostly at night in the presence of the nearest relatives.

Many Jews could not afford to pay the funeral expenses to undertakers or to the community. People threw their dead on the streets. Others died on the streets of hunger and the funerals were arranged by the community.

In 1936 the mortality of the Jews in Warsaw amounted to 9.7 per thousand. In 1940 it was $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as high, in 1941 7 to 8 times as high. During the first half of 1942 the mortality rose in an appalling degree. Since July, 1942, when mass-executions and massacres took place, the mortality reached catastrophic proportions.

THE PROBLEM OF DEPORTEES

A particularly difficult problem was presented by the Jews driven out of the small towns in the Warsaw district on the left bank of the Vistula in February and March 1941. About 70,000 Jews were driven into Warsaw from the towns of Piaseczno, Zyrardow, Blonie, Sochaczew, Mszczonow, Pruszkow, Jeziorna and Karczew. The deported Jews

could take only hand baggage and had to leave the rest of their possessions for the Germans to steal.

On February 2, 1942, the Germans deported 1,500 Jews from Zyrardow to Warsaw where they were first quarantined, after which the men were brutally beaten until they lost consciousness. The women had to stand in the public bath naked for hours and bear the insults and jeers of the Nazis.

On February 15, 1941, all Jews were driven out of Sochaczew and the *Judenrat* of the Warsaw Ghetto placed them in shelters. All these deportations took place in severely cold weather, and a large number of the deportees arrived in Warsaw in a terrible state. During the months of February to April, 1941, 44,000 refugees arrived in Warsaw.

The Germans forbade the deportees to go back to their towns even for the purpose of collecting some of their belongings. The victims risked their lives to steal to their old homes in order to buy some food from the peasants in the surrounding villages. In June, 1941, the Governor of the Warsaw district barred all food and asylum to those guilty of such conduct.

According to the report of the American Committee of the TOZ-OZE there were in May, 1941, 17,800 refugees in various asylums. About 11,000 refugees depended on the charity of private philanthropic organizations who supplied them with bread and some clothes. The Jewish community supported 6,000 refugees. The asylums for the homeless were terribly overcrowded so that there was hardly any room to sleep. During the day the homeless Jews could not stay in the asylums. Among the 3,333 children in them, 42% were covered with lice as a result of the inadequate bathing and disinfecting facilities.

The terrible conditions in which the Jewish population lived caused a rise in tuberculosis, typhus and other epidemic diseases to which thousands of refugees fell victim. According to Polish sources, the number of tuberculars in Warsaw grew during the first half of 1941, compared with the same period in 1939, by 113% among Poles and 433% among Jews. During the first half of 1941 there were 1,726 deaths resulting from tuberculosis among Poles and 647 among Jews. During the same period in 1939 the number of Poles in Warsaw who died of tuberculosis was 810, the number of Jews 121.

According to the report of the TOZ in 1940, the organization had under its supervision 5,999 tuberculosis cases among the refugees. In various refugee asylums there were 3,860 refugees, among them 1,200 children who had symptoms of tuberculosis. In July 1941 the TOZ had under its supervision 9,330 refugees, of which 3,350—more than

one-third—were sick. In January 1942 out of 2,810 Jewish children refugees treated by the organization, 890 were ill.

According to Polish reports, the loss of weight among the Warsaw residents as compared with 1939 was an average of 40 to 55 pounds per person, resulting in an increase in the number of those affected by anemia, heart ailments and nervous disorders.

The large masses of refugees were confronted with very poor housing conditions in the Ghetto. In spite of the appalling congestion, 114 asylums were set up for refugees in 1941. About 9,000 refugees were placed in prayer-houses, ruined houses and cellars.

These unsanitary conditions caused a greater increase in sickness and mortality among the refugees. In May 1941 out of 11,200 refugees 281 died, in January 1942 out of 8,887 refugees 729 died.

The health situation among the refugee children was worse still. Nearly all of them were ill or in very poor physical condition. In August 1941 the TOZ ascertained that among 12,164 children 13% were in good physical condition, 35% were tolerably healthy and 52% in poor health.

Out of 1,861 children examined by the TOZ in the early part of 1942 only 30% were in good health and 65% were in very poor health. 46% of the children examined were clean and 54% were filthy and full of lice.

Jewish children died of hunger and disease. They literally fell in the streets and there was no one to take care of them. One of the common sights on the streets of Warsaw were children begging or picking up garbage in the sewers.

In one children's home 125 out of 607 children died. In some of the large private houses 30% of all children died of typhus. In the Jewish children's hospital on Sliska Street in the Warsaw Ghetto during the first three months of 1941, out of 315 Jewish children, 96 children or 24% died.

The mortality among the Jewish population in the Warsaw Ghetto kept on rising. In the month of April 1941 the number of Jews who died was 2,438, in May 4,887 and in June it reached the figure of 6,000.

Compared with the mortality before the war the Ghetto mortality increased many times. Before the war between 300 and 400 Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto died every month. During the war the Jewish population was increased by 15%. Proportionate to the increase a mortality of about 500 per month could be expected. But the rise was 12 to 15 times as high. In July 1941 the mortality rose still higher. By the last months of 1941 about 300 Jews died every day.

Die Juden müssen aus Europa verschwinden

Die dritte Aufgabe der NSDAP, meine lieben Parteigenossen, ist die Sicherung der weltanschaulichen Einheit. Die weltanschaulich feste Grundlage, die uns die NSDAP gibt, ist die einzige Möglichkeit zur Durchsetzung der Ziele, die uns im Generalgouvernement gestellt sind. Der Arbeitsbereich im Generalgouvernement wurde im Einvernehmen mit dem Stellvertreter des Führers gegründet. Hg. Schaif hat den Auftrag bekommen, in allen Fällen als mein Generalbevollmächtigter diese Organisation aufzubauen. Ich möchte Hg. Schaif und seinen Mitarbeitern an dieser Stelle für ihre Arbeit danken und ihnen meine Anerkennung ausdrücken für den bisherigen Ausbau des Parteibereiches.

Wir kennen, so sehr der Reichsleiter fort, die Meisterhände feinerer Maschinenbauern und Ueberzeugungen, die hofften, daß durch diesen Krieg die NSDAP. verschwinde, sehr genau. Nun, da die Partei hier im Generalgouvernement ihren stolzen Wohnsitz hat, wird sich hier niemand in legendärer Weise betätigen. Die Partei hat gerade hier das stolze Zeugnis abzulegen, daß sie berufen ist, dort, wo die deutsche Wehrmacht ein Land für Deutschland erobert hat, dieses Land für alle Zeiten dem deutschen Machtbereich näherzustellen.

Denken Sie, wenn vor einem Jahr hier in Krakau irgend jemand gesagt hätte, daß am 15. August 1940 eine Kundgebung der NSDAP. hier in Krakau und im ganzen Generalgouvernement stattfinden sollte, so hätte man den Betreffenden für einen absoluten Idioten erklärt. Es ist ein wahrhaftes Wunder, daß diese alte deutsche Stadt Krakau nun wieder im Schutze des Großdeutschen Reiches vollzogen hat. Denken Sie an

Warschau und Lublin, an Radom und an die anderen Städte, wo vereint einmal auf Einladung polnischer Regierungen deutsche Menschen eingezogen waren, wo in Lublin deutsche Kaufleute ganze Stadtviertel richteten, da in Warschau heute noch der Jüggermarkt daran erinnert, wie deutsches Leben durch die Jahrhunderte in diesem Gebiet sich verwurzelt. Wir sind nun in diesem Land und werden als Deutsche niemals wieder dieses Land verlassen. Das Hakenkreuz wird über diesem Land wehen bleiben bis in die fernste Zukunft. Und das polnische Volk ist so, wie einmal schon vor 700 Jahren, wieder unter der Schutzherrschaft der deutschen Nation. Die Weichsel ist der Strom Deutschlands und wird Deutschlands Oststrom bleiben. Es ist unvorstellbar, welche Wandlung unser Schicksal in diesen knappen Feststellungen aufweist, und wir haben nur Veranlassung, meine Parteigenossen, daß jeder, an welcher Stelle er steht, an diesem Wert mitzuarbeiten.

Wir müssen dafür sorgen, daß insbesondere die deutsche Stadt Krakau vollkommen den jüdischen Charakters entkleidet wird und Sie wissen, daß ich versichert habe, daß die Juden bis heute freiwillig abzureisen haben. Wer ab heute Mitternacht als Jude ohne Erlaubnis hier in Krakau noch weilt, wird aber morgen der Zwangsarbeitspflicht verfallen sein. Es ist ein unmöglicher Zustand, daß sich die Repräsentation des Großdeutschen Reiches Adolf Hitler hier in einer Stadt etablieren soll, in der es so von Juden wimmelt, daß man als ausländischer Mensch kaum durch die Straßen gehen konnte. Und es ist klar, daß damit aber auch ein ernstes Signal gegeben ist: Die Juden müssen aus ganz Europa verschwinden.

"THE JEWS MUST DISAPPEAR FROM EUROPE"

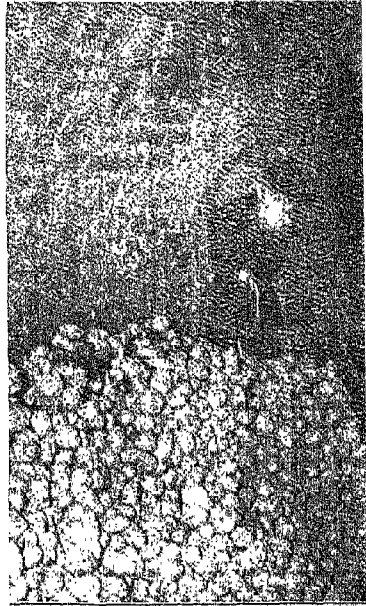
Reproduction of article in the Krakow Nazi newspaper, Krakauer Zeitung.



GESTAPO OFFICERS IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY BUILDING IN WARSAW, QUESTIONING MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE JUDENRAT

THE GERMAN PRESS UNCOVERS JEWISH "CRIMINALS"

Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung



Stadt unter der Stadt

1940 Nr. 49

Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung



The Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung of December 5, 1940 printed a series of photographs, obviously posed, intended to show how the Jews in Lublin hoarded stocks of potatoes. Note the "grosstes Kartoffellager" and the tragic faces of the Jews compelled to act in



GERMAN SOLDIERS SHAVE OFF THE BEARD OF A WARSAW JEW
Note the grins of the soldiers as contrasted with the dignity on the
face of the Jew.



ABANDONED CHILDREN ASLEEP IN THE
WARSAW GHETTO STREETS

In the month of April 1941, there were 361 births in the Ghetto, and 81 marriages. During the last months of 1941 the number of births reached the lowest figure.

A fatal year for the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto was 1941. The mortality rose with lightning speed. Epidemic diseases wrought havoc. Hunger and maltreatment claimed many more victims. Physically broken, the Jews of Warsaw faced the new year of 1942. That year saw the beginning of the liquidation and the mass-extirmination of the entire Jewish population. Men, women and children and even the inmates of aged people homes, children's homes and hospitals fell victim to the carefully worked-out plan of extermination.

CHAPTER THREE

LODZ

IN 1939, Lodz, the second largest city in Poland and the second largest Jewish center after Warsaw in all of Europe, had a Jewish community of over 200,000, which constituted about one-third of the city's total population.

Jewish energy and enterprise were largely responsible for the rapid growth of the city, center of a huge textile industry. The Jewish settlement of Lodz began in 1765 when a few families came there from the neighboring village of Lenczyca. The first textile factories were established in Lodz in the first half of the 19th century by a group of Jewish weavers. From then on Lodz steadily progressed in industrial development and in 1872 the city's population reached 30,000, including 15,000 Jews. The growth of the textile industry and the parallel development of the city were so rapid that according to the census of 1897 the total population was 314,000 including 100,000 Jews. By 1931 the census showed a Jewish population of 190,000.

Jews had a large share, estimated at 70%, in the total business life of the city. This thriving and important center of Jewish life was among the first of the Polish cities to fall under German occupation.

THE ROUNDING-UP OF JEWISH LEADERS

The Nazis, from the beginning of the occupation, applied drastic methods in order to carry out their plan of first robbing and later exterminating the local Jewish population. The persecution of the Jews was initiated there much earlier than in other cities. The experience gained by the Germans in Lodz was to serve to some extent as a pattern to be followed in the rest of Poland.

In the first few days after the Nazi armies marched into Lodz the arrests of Jewish leaders and communal workers began and German soldiers began looting Jewish places of business and plunder Jewish homes.

The first to be arrested were the local Jewish leaders of the different

political groups: among them were Dr. Gibianski, City Councilman Arieh Holenderski, Poznanski, Schalit, Marchew and Rumkowski. They were taken to the Gestapo where they were brutally beaten and subjected to the humiliation of performing repugnant tasks.

Some of them, including Chaim Rumkowski, later to be appointed as Senior Member of the Jewish Council, were released after ten days. The others were sent to Germany, to the notorious concentration camps at Dachau and Oranienburg, where Arieh Holenderski was tortured to death. The others were not heard from during all the time that communication existed between the Ghetto of Lodz and the outside world.

Eyewitness accounts of the atrocities committed by the Nazi occupants are contained in the depositions of Jews who managed to escape from Lodz to the Soviet Union or who were able to leave Poland as Palestine citizens.

LOOTING, BEATING AND MURDER

The young poet, I. Jonasowicz, now in Soviet Russia, in a book in Yiddish entitled *The Blood Calls for Vengeance*, published in Moscow in 1941, describes the arrest and the death sentence of Isaiah Uger, a veteran journalist, for many years the editor of a Lodz daily Yiddish newspaper, with whom Jonasowicz was imprisoned by the Gestapo for a few days.

"At twelve o'clock midnight, stormtroopers broke into Uger's house and with a volley of revolver shots severely wounded Uger, some members of his family and the non-Jewish servants in his house," he wrote, "Then they brutally beat them up and took away all valuables such as jewelry, the better clothes, several hundred zlotys in cash, and took Uger along with them. A few days later, when Jonasowicz was still imprisoned, Uger was sentenced to death and was made to dig his own grave."

Several residents of Lodz, Dr. M.P., Mrs. I.I., D.W., Dr. I.L., Engineer S.W., Mrs. H.I., D.N., and H.K. who escaped from Poland in 1940 and 1941, made depositions before the Representation of Polish Jewry in Palestine, stating that the Germans in Lodz, guided by information given them by the local *Volksdeutsche*, searched the homes of well-to-do Jews and, if they failed to find money or jewelry there, they took the bedding with them.

There were even cases of storm troopers pulling the blankets off sleeping children. The looting continued both in homes and in places of business, and even individuals on the streets were robbed. From private homes the Nazis took away the best pieces of furniture, such

as pianos, armchairs, etc., forcing the owners to carry the furniture down the stairs to trucks waiting outside. They brought up heavy trucks to Jewish places of business, broke the locks with the aid of iron bars and forced Jewish passers-by to load the merchandise on the trucks. Jews who happened to be walking on the streets, especially women, were robbed of their overcoats and watches and sometimes even of their shoes, in spite of the cold and the rain.

The coffee houses where Jews often met were frequently subjected to surprise raids by the Germans ostensibly in search of foreign valuta, but in reality to take away every zloty they found on them.

German officers would drive into the Jewish district in closed taxis, then suddenly jump out and, holding large scissors in their hands, they would seize any bearded Jew in their path and cut off his beard. They also caught young Jewish children, boys and girls, and deported them to Germany where the children disappeared without a trace.

On the fourth day after their entry into the city, they arrested Rabbi M.M. Segal while he stood at prayer in his prayer-shawl and phylacteries. The stormtroopers took the rabbi just as he was and put him on a truck which they drove through the city, subjecting the rabbi to every kind of insult, pulling his beard, spitting in his face and noisily laughing at him.

POGROM

A pogrom against the Jewish population was organized on October 8, 1939. The world received little information about this pogrom because of the censorship and the ban after January 1940 on any correspondence between the Jews of Lodz and the outside world.

But something about the pogrom is known from the account by the poet Jonasowicz. According to Jonasowicz, Goebbels himself came to Lodz to conduct the bloody pogrom which the German storm-troopers staged in the Jewish district. For two hours machine-guns worked, shooting into Jewish houses. Then the Nazis went from house to house, brutally beating up the Jews and dragging them to 152 Kilinski Street, the headquarters of the Storm-troopers. On the way many Jews were shot dead.

A Jewish driver who sought to escape the machine-gun fire was seized by the Storm-troopers and led through the streets, a heavy rope around his neck. Babies were thrown out of the windows by the Storm-troopers as they plundered Jewish homes, and mothers often went out of their minds with grief.

Jonasowicz tells the following story. "A Jewish physician in the employ of the community, driving the ambulance of the Jewish First Aid Station and picking up Jewish wounded on the streets, was stopped by the Gestapo and taken with his car behind the city. There the ambulance was covered with gasoline and set afire. The wounded were permitted to crawl out after the fire was already in full blaze. The physician, his attendant and the chauffeur, who were to be the last to emerge from the car, were burned to death before their turn came, together with some of the most seriously wounded who could not crawl."

The head of the community, Chaim Rumkowski, beaten up and bleeding, ran to the Nazi commandant, imploring him to put a stop to the pogrom. The commandant replied that, after all, nothing was happening except that the soldiers were having a little fun before going off to the front. . . .

VANDALISM

On November 11, the Polish Independence Day, the Nazis seized Jews on the street and under the threat of death for disobedience forced them to demolish the magnificent monument to the Polish hero Tadeusz Kosciuszko. Groups of Poles were brought to watch the Jews doing this work. On the following day, when several synagogues were mysteriously set on fire, the Nazi newspapers stated that the arson was committed by the outraged Poles in revenge for the desecration of their hero's memory.

On November 13, 14 and 15 more synagogues were burned, including the two largest ones, on Kosciuszko Avenue and on Wolborska Street in Lodz, altogether about ten houses of worship. On November 16, 1939 the local Nazi newspaper *Litzmannstadter Zeitung* again ascribed the fire to the Poles.

Often the Nazis would compel orthodox rabbis to desecrate the scrolls of the Laws. The Mizrachi leader, Rabbi Treistman, who refused to carry out the order of the Gestapo officers, was brutally beaten and sent to a concentration camp. Seventeen members of the *Judenrat* who were arrested in February, 1940, were sent to one of the most dreaded concentration camps in East Prussia.

HOUSE-SEARCHES AND HUMILIATIONS

A deposition made by Dr. M. P. of Lodz before the Representation of Polish Jewry in Palestine, reads as follows:

"Searches in Jewish homes took place more and more frequently and were carried out with the connivance of the building superintendents. On entering the houses, the Germans took away not only valuables, but also pillows and blankets. Worst of all was their treatment of the Jews seized for forced labor. At 9 o'clock in the morning, military trucks would stop at the street-corners, and any Jew who came out of a house or a courtyard would be thrown into the truck. Sometimes the Germans would go inside the yard and, locking the gate, would round up every Jew in the place, including the sick, and take them for forced labor. The Jews used to return from work broken and sick. After work they were made to sing *Hatikvah* (the national Jewish anthem) until they were hoarse and then they were clubbed over their heads.

"On November 12, 1939, agents of the Gestapo entered the Astoria Coffee House on the pretext that a trade in foreign valuta was going on in the place; they took the passports from every Jewish patron, ordering them to present themselves at 9 o'clock next morning, at the headquarters of the Gestapo. When the Jews arrived there on the following morning, they were all sentenced to death. On the same day, the Germans arrested the Jewish manufacturers I.K. and his son, P.R.F., the brothers G. and their brother-in-law P., the chairman of the Jewish community, Ch Rumkowski and several others. They were ordered to do vigorous exercises for several hours, and when any one of them failed to do exactly as ordered, he was brutally beaten over the head. Some were released, a few were sent to concentration camps and the rest were condemned to death and made to dig their own graves.

"When the graves were ready, the Jews were ordered to kneel and the officer shot them one by one with his revolver. I knew some of them personally and one of them was our partner in business. After the officer had shot them, aiming at their heads, they tumbled into the graves. People who witnessed the execution were strictly warned by the Germans against divulging the place of burial."

Mrs. I. I. relates the following: "One of my acquaintances, Mr. Chwat, who lived outside the city, was told by the Germans to dig his own grave. Then they blindfolded him and ordered him to turn, shooting at him as he ran. They were in fact shooting into the air, merely making cruel sport of the man's terror.

"Two of my women acquaintances, sisters living with their mother who suffered from a heart ailment, were visited by the agents of the

Gestapo who told them to carry out all their furniture into the yard. Then the Nazis took away all smaller articles in the house. During the scene the mother of the two girls was seized with a heart attack and died.

"One of my acquaintances, a prominent manufacturer, was visited by agents of the Gestapo at six in the morning and was forced, under threat of being shot, to jump out of a second story window. He broke his leg and suffered other severe injuries."

ANTI-JEWISH DECREES

During the first eight months of Nazi rule, that is, before the Ghetto was established in Lodz, the German occupation authorities issued the following decrees:

On September 19, 1939, Jews were forbidden to have in their possession more than 2,000 Polish zlotys. All money in excess of that sum had to be deposited in the bank, out of which they were permitted to draw a small amount each month for the most necessary expenses.

On November 7, 1939, a decree was issued annexing Lodz and its environs to the third Reich; on November 8, this decree went into effect.

The name of Lodz was by official decree changed to *Litzmannstadt*, Litzmann being the German general who conquered Lodz during the First World War. The use of the name Lodz was prohibited and any letters thus addressed went undelivered. Any Lodz resident who referred to the city as Lodz, rather than as Litzmannstadt, was severely punished.

On November 12, 1939, Jews were ordered to wear the yellow band. On the same day, Jews were barred from Piotrkowska Street, the main street of the city, an exception being made only for the Jews actually living on that street, and they had to obtain special permission at considerable cost.

On November 18, 1939, the *Litzmannstadter Zeitung* published the following decrees:

1) All Jews, without regard to age or sex, must wear as a special sign on their right arm, a 10-centimeter-wide yellow band.

2) Between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. no Jew is permitted to leave his dwelling without special permission. Whoever violates this regulation will be punished by death.

In December 1939, a new decree was issued to the effect that, instead of an arm band, the Jews were to wear two yellow patches, one in front on the lapel of the overcoat, the other in the back, both in the form of a triangle.

In December 1939, all Jews were banished from one part of Zgierska Street.

In December 1939, there arrived in Lodz the official leader of the Hitler Youth, Baldur von Schirach, who made the following public statement:

"The aim of the German youth is to uproot the three hundred thousand Jews from the German city of Litzmannstadt."

On February 8, 1940, all Jews of Lodz were already living in the Baluty, the slum section of the town.

Apart from the above ordinances, decrees and regulations, there were many others of a petty nature. There were prohibitions against Jews walking on the sidewalks, owning radios, baking or buying white bread and similar regulations designed to make daily life well-nigh unbearable.

In the first four months of the Nazi occupation, according to official German sources, 41 Jews were shot in Lodz on the accusation of illegal possession of arms.

DEPORTATIONS

In December 1939, and in January 1940, the Germans felt there were still too many Jews in Lodz and began driving them out. The "deportation" proceeded at first according to streets, later in alphabetical order, and the deportees were not permitted to take any of their belongings with them. About 20,000 Jews were driven out in the severe cold weather in the months of December 1939 and January 1940, some to the Lublin Reservation, others to other localities in the Government-General.

A Pole who succeeded in escaping from Lodz and from the occupied territories, sent the following account to the weekly bulletin *Poland Fights*:

"The deportations reached their peak in December, 1939 and the first week of 1940, at a time when the weather was bitterly cold. The Nazis were particularly merciless with professional elements—lawyers, doctors, teachers, and former officials. The expulsion orders were usually given at night. The victims were rounded up and brought to factory buildings to await deportation. They were frequently kept in these cold, unheated factories for days, after which they were loaded into cattle-cars and coal-trucks, each holding from sixty to seventy persons, and carried off to the Government General. No provisions were made for heating these trucks, and no one was permitted to feed the depor-

tees during the several days journey. Many women and children, who had no warm clothing, froze to death before arriving at their destination."

THE ESTABLISHING OF THE LODZ GHETTO

The deportations were suddenly discontinued, and on February 8, 1940, the leader of the S.S. Brigade in Lodz, Schaeffer, issued an order establishing a Ghetto in Lodz where at that time, including the refugees from the surrounding territories there were again some 200,000 Jews.

The period between February 9 and April 30 was designated as the transitional period, during which the nearly 150,000 Jews from other parts of Lodz had to liquidate their affairs, leave their dwellings and houses and move into the poor, neglected and filthy quarter of Baluty where 59,000 Jews already lived.

During that time all non-Jews living in the section of Baluty in which the Ghetto was to be established, had to move out while the Jews from other parts of Lodz had to move in. The Jews were not permitted to take anything with them, neither their tools nor their machines or other instruments. Nor could they take their furniture or the merchandise from their stores, nor even all their clothing.

Paragraph 3 of the order permitted the Jews to take into the Ghetto only as much as each person could carry without the use of any means of transportation.

When the leaders of the *Judenrat* sought to intervene with the chief of the Gestapo, he cynically replied that the Jews of Poland seemed to lack the self-respect which drove so many German Jews, and later Austrian Jews, to commit suicide.

April 30, 1940, was the last day on which the Ghetto in Lodz was to be closed: on May 1, no person considered a Jew under the Nuremberg Laws would be permitted to reside outside the Ghetto wall. Nearly 200,000 Jews were crowded into the already congested section of Baluty and were totally cut off from the outside world, without means of subsistence, without the right to work in the factories and without their own working tools which would enable at least some of them to earn a living.

Until the month of April, 1940, during the period of transition, the Ghetto was fenced off by barbed wires, but at the end of April, when the transfer into the Ghetto was finally completed, the Ghetto was surrounded with a wall six feet high.

The exits from those streets which connected the Ghetto with other parts of the city were fenced off with barbed wire.

There were some streets through which the city street-cars had to pass on their way to the suburbs. To make sure that passengers would not come in contact with the inhabitants of the Ghetto, high elevated platforms were erected with stairs on each side, and these served as overpasses for crossing the street.

In the Ghetto itself there was a special police force and a separate post-office with its own letter-carriers. The post-office has probably been abolished since, for in the middle of the summer of 1940, the Jewish population of the Ghetto was completely forbidden to correspond not only with people abroad but also with relatives in the rest of the country. Refugees from Lodz who were in Wilno at the time suddenly stopped getting letters from their families and even acknowledgements of the packages of food they had sent home.

Since the district set aside for the Ghetto had no sewage system and most of the houses were old, without plumbing or proper sanitation, typhus spread with an appalling mortality rate. In the year 1941 alone 17,000 Jews died in Lodz, eight times the number that had died in any pre-war year. This was partly due, also, to lack of doctors and medicines. There were only four pharmacies and forty-six physicians in the entire Ghetto, where 200,000 Jews were herded.

The Germans looked upon the Ghetto of Lodz as an experiment in their long-range plan to exterminate the Jews. They found the experiment highly satisfactory.

The *Brigadeführer* Albert wrote in the official police newspaper, *Deutsche Polizei*, that "a hundred years ago the German clothing workers in Lodz demanded the creation of a Ghetto for Jews. But that suggestion was not carried out for a hundred years, until the Germans themselves occupied Lodz."

The *Koelnische Zeitung* of April 5, 1941, boasted that "although the Ghetto of Lodz was initiated as a mere trial, a prelude to the solution of the Jewish question, it has turned out to be the best and most perfect temporary solution of the Jewish problem."

The Germans soon realized their mistake in banning the Jews of Lodz from the textile factories and the clothing industry and modified their tactics. Not only did they permit, but later they even forced, the Jews of the Lodz Ghetto to work for the German war industry; textile workers at their looms and unskilled workers at building roads. They were taken out every morning by German guards and brought back in the evening. They worked twelve or thirteen hours a day for a small remuneration insufficient for minimum subsistence.

Svenska Dagenbladet reported that the Jewish workers of the Lodz Ghetto were barred from any of the social welfare agencies. They enjoyed no sick benefits or statutory wages and hours. At work they were entirely isolated from the non-Jewish workers.

For their work in government factories they received payment in scrip negotiable for provisions in the municipal food stores. But the shopping hours designated for the Jews were such that there was no food left by the time they came to buy.

The *Koelnische Zeitung* of February 20, 1941, said: "Food will be sent into the Ghetto of Lodz only in exchange for manufactured products. The Jews there can also earn their bread by working on the roads."

The *Frankfurter Zeitung* wrote on August 15, 1941: "The nearly 200,000 Jews in Lodz are thickly crowded in a Ghetto completely isolated from the rest of the city. The Ghetto wall is one-and-three-tenths miles long. There are textile factories there and the Jews produce various articles. Furthermore, there are 7,000 Jews employed as tailors, 5,000 as shoemakers, and 1,000 as carpenters. There are many others employed in road-building. The *Judenrat* collects the manufactured goods and exchanges them for the food for the Ghetto."

To this must be added, first, that the provisions received by the *Judenrat* in exchange for the manufactured products were actually starvation rations and were given only to the workers who had to share them with those members of their families who did not work. Second, the *Judenrat* was merely used by the German authorities to provide the Germans with unpaid or little-paid forced labor. But in spite of this brutal exploitation of Jewish working power, the Germans applied towards the Jewish population an undisguised policy of starvation in order to accelerate the process of extermination.

First at all, the German authorities rationed all provisions to a point far below minimum needs although before the war, the Lodz area had a surplus of food products. Furthermore, the population of Lodz was divided into three categories, Germans, Poles and Jews, each subject to its own rationing system. Poles received half of what Germans received, the Jews only half of that. The Jewish and Polish ration cards were limited to black bread, potatoes, groats and margarine. Under such conditions a black market was bound to arise, although to a very limited extent. The result was that many Poles and Jews were shot for illegal trading and in May, 1941, 345 Jews were sentenced to life imprisonment for that offense.

At the same time the German authorities were carrying out the policy

of exterminating the Jews, they brought in many Germans from Germany proper and the Baltic states. By 1942 there were in Lodz 140,000 Germans as compared with the city's pre-war German population of 50,000.

If we are to accept the testimony of the official Nazi newspaper in Lodz, the *Litzmannstadter Zeitung*, then "the last remnants of the Jewish religion have already been removed now that all the Jews have been driven out of Lodz."

CHAPTER FOUR

KRAKOW AND KRAKOW PROVINCE

THE Jewish community in Krakow is one of the oldest in Poland. Its records go back to the 13th century. As long ago as 1304 Krakow had a "Jewish Street" and in the middle of the 14th century there were already several synagogues in the city.

The community was founded in the 14th century when the King of Poland, Casimir the Great, invited the Jews to develop the trades and crafts of the city. Ever since, the Jewish community was rooted in the city's economic, cultural, political and social life. It was a community in the full swing of its development when the Germans marched in on September 6, 1939, after a three-day bombardment which ruined some of its most picturesque sections.

Thousands of Jews fled the city several days before the enemy entered. Some went to Eastern Galicia, others southward towards Rumania. But the number of refugees who came to Krakow from the surrounding country exceeded the number of those who fled. With the refugees from Germany and Czechoslovakia, who had come before the war, and with those now pouring in, the number of Jews reached 72,000.

The Jewish community was faced with the difficult task of organizing relief for the refugees. At first, the German authorities did not interfere with this work and the Jews had no hint of the impending destruction. But before long the process of organized and systematic persecution and oppression was set in motion.

LOOTING AND MASSACRE

A prominent Krakow citizen whose name cannot for the present be made public, a reliable person and the owner of a large store, who succeeded in escaping Krakow in 1940, reported to the American Federation of Polish Jews his personal experiences there.

On October 10, 1939, he said, a drunken German soldier, strolling in the forenoon near the Hotel Royal where German officers lived, fired

a shot from his revolver and kept on walking. A few minutes later the officers came out of the hotel with their loaded revolvers and began rounding up Jewish passers-by. One of the officers demanded that "twenty Jews must be shot for the crime of the Jew who shot at the German officers through the windows of the hotel." When they found that there were not that many Jews on the street in front of the hotel they broke into some neighboring Jewish houses and dragged out an old man, Zucker, owner of a large glassware store, his son-in-law, the tailor Unterweis, and several others until the number of the Jews seized was twenty. Among them was the head of the Jewish registry office, Offen. All of the twenty men were sent to a concentration camp in Germany without any trial or investigation.

On a Monday, during the second half of November, 1939, a group of German officers in seventeen small military cars drove through the Jewish district, seizing any passing Jews who caught their fancy. When all cars were filled they drove to a field outside of the city and there let the Jews out of the cars, shouting at them: "Run for your lives." As the Jews ran, the officers aimed their revolvers at them and ten out of the seventeen Jews fell dead, while the remaining seven were wounded. Among those murdered was Landau, a prominent Zionist leader.

On December 3, 1939, at 11 o'clock at night, large military detachments surrounded the entire Jewish section from Dietel Parkway to the Vistula. Sentinels of the S. S. were placed before the gates and inside the houses, and the inhabitants were forbidden to leave or to look out of the windows until the order was revoked. The Jewish population spent a sleepless night, and people took leave of one another expecting death at any hour. On the following morning at 8 o'clock, all houses were searched. The soldiers spent several hours in each, breaking up the floors, digging in the cellars, tearing up rugs and carpets and destroying the bedding. Officially the searches were for foreign exchange (currency), jewelry and large sums of Polish currency which Jews were forbidden to have in their possession.

The officers in command did not hesitate to confiscate for their own personal use things such as silk stockings, shoes or bedding which the Jews were permitted to have; they even took away food. The search of the Jewish houses continued until 2:30 p.m. on the following day. During those two and one-half days 61 Jews lost their lives by Nazi bullets for such "crimes" as appearing on balconies or going to the privies in the yard. There were also Jews from the province who came into the city during that period and, ignorant of the order confining all

Jews to their homes, were shot on the streets when seen by Nazis. In no case was anyone warned before being shot at

The searches were stopped at 2:30 p.m. on December 5, half an hour before the scheduled arrival of a Soviet mission from Lwow in connection with the exchange of Germans for Ukrainians. The Jews were told not to show themselves on the streets during the next two days

To seal the agreement between the Soviet mission and the local German military authorities about the exchange of populations, the Soviet officials needed a rubber stamp. The Germans took them to Alexander Filhab, who had his workshop on Grodzka Street, where the order for the seal was given and filled. After the Soviet mission left, Filhab and his son were arrested by the Gestapo on the charge of working for the Soviet mission. The father was so brutally handled that he went insane, and the son was executed.

DEPORTATION

By the end of June, 1940, the German authorities in Krakow declared that only those Jews whose services could be of use to the Germans would be allowed to live in the city and that all others must leave before August 15. Those who left before the time limit were granted the "privilege" of being allowed to take with them their furniture and household effects. The Jews of Krakow were thrown into confusion. They ran from office to office to ascertain whether they were "economically useful," according to the official order, and they had to make out documents and obtain certificates and permits.

In the meantime, about 30,000 Jews left Krakow by the end of the first half of August. Some went to Kielce, most Jews went to Warsaw to swell the Ghetto population there, and many went to Miedzyrzec. In each of these places the Jewish communities took care of the Krakow refugees. After August 15, the German authorities were compelled several times to defer the time-limit for the voluntary evacuation of the Jews. By October 1940, another 20,000 were deported from Krakow, with permission to take along only 55 pounds of baggage each. The property of the deportees was taken over by the *Treuhand-Stelle Zentrale* (Central Trust Office), which evaluated it at a ridiculously low price and sold it to *Volksdeutsche* (racial Germans).

The deportations were interrupted in October 1940 with a little over 20,000 Jews remaining in Krakow, consisting exclusively of artisans, technicians and skilled workers. Every one of them had a special residence permit, which had to be renewed each month. Those who

failed to obtain a renewal on their residence permit were forced to leave the city forthwith together with their families.

During the months of October, November and December, 1940, the Jews from the adjacent towns began coming into Krakow to live with their relatives after having obtained special permission from the authorities. In December the Germans, fearful of an increase in the Jewish population of Krakow, forbade Jews outside of the city to move into the city. There was also a drastic reduction in the renewal of residence permits.

In November forced deportations of Jews were renewed, the reason advanced by the Germans being the increase in the Jewish population of the city, which was in conflict with the avowed German objective of making Krakow *Judenrein*.

Following is the German text of the order for deportations, with an English translation:

ORDER FOR THE DEPORTATION OF JEWS FROM THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF KRAKOW

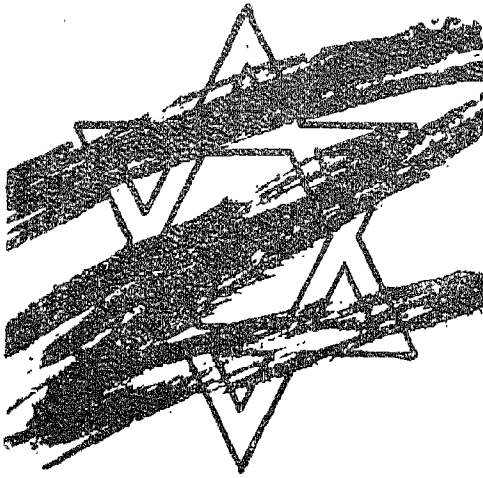
"I have ascertained that the orders issued by the authorities for the removal of the Jews from the city of Krakow were disregarded in various ways. The time limit fixed for the voluntary removal of the Jews has passed without corresponding results. On the contrary, a new influx of Jews has taken place.

"In order to reach the determined objective to rid Krakow of the Jews and to allow only those Jews to remain who for the time being are needed because of the nature of their work, I order the following to take effect immediately:

"(1) The influx of Jews into the territory of the city of Krakow is prohibited. Reference is made to regulation No. 1, dated December 11, 1939 (V.B.L. G.G. P.* pp. 231 and 232), for carrying out the order dated October 26, 1939, governing forced labor for Jews.

"(2) Residence in Krakow is permitted only to those Jews who are in possession of a special permit. This document must be carried on the person of its holder and must be shown on demand by the authorities. Jews found without such a document will be forcibly ousted.

"(3) In order to prevent the Jews from settling in localities where they are not wanted the expulsion of the Jews will be directed by the authorities.



Auszug der Juden aus der deutschen Stadt Krakau

"EXODUS OF JEWS FROM THE
GERMAN CITY OF KRAKOW."

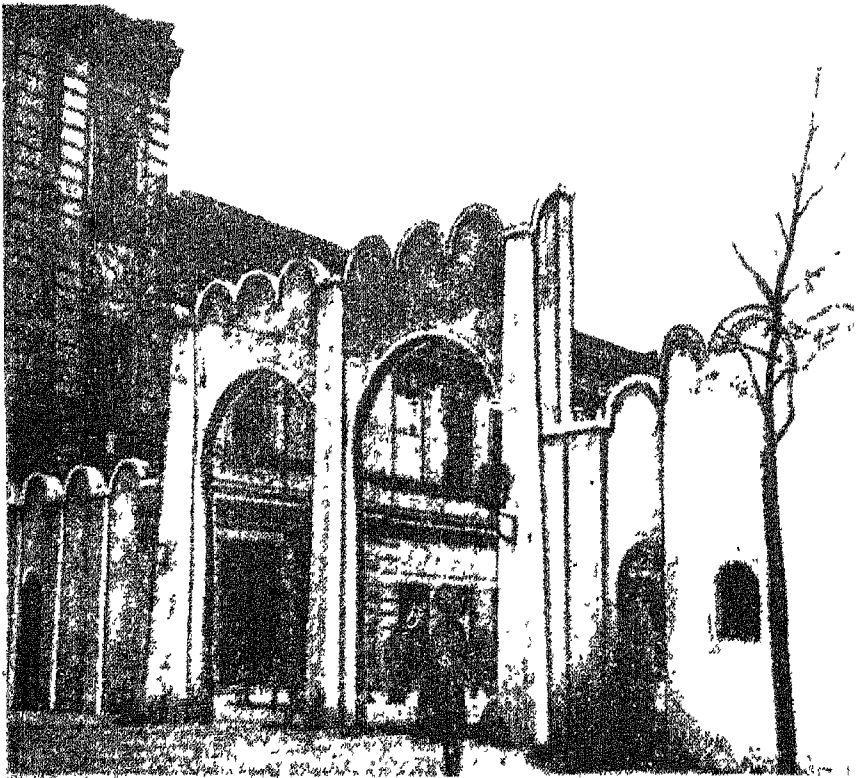
Characteristic headline in the
Krakauer Zeitung

Wie der Generalgouverneur kürzlich in seiner Rede betonte, wird die deutsche Stadt Krakau vollkommen des jüdischen Charakters entkleidet. »Es ist ein unmöglicher Zustand, daß sich die Repräsentation des Großdeutschen Reiches Adolf Hitlers hier in einer Stadt etablieren soll, in der es so von Juden wimmelt, daß man als ausländischer Mensch kaum durch die Straßen gehen konnte«, so sagte Dr. Frank. Die Bilder zeigen die Auswanderung der Juden, denen auch die Ostbahn zur Verfügung stand. Andere Orte des Generalgouvernements sind ihr Ziel

Clipping from Krakauer Zeitung quoting General Governor Frank's statement that Krakow would be de-Judaized.



ORDER OF THE GERMAN
AUTHORITIES IN POLISH FOR-
BIDDING THE USE OF STREET-
CARS, TAXICABS AND BUSES
TO THE JEWS IN KRAKOW.

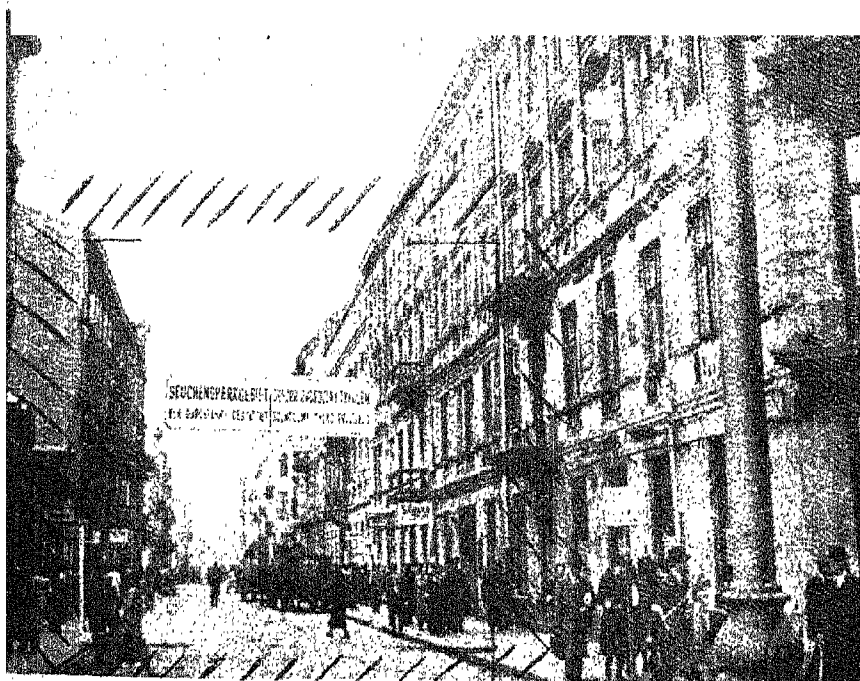


Die Umsäuerung des jüdischen Wohnbezirks von Krakau ist, wie unsere Aufnahme zeigt, einer der Hauptstadt des Generalgouvernements würdigen Weise vorgenommen worden.

PART OF THE KRAKOW GHETTO WALL

The German caption under this photograph in the Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung boasts of the dignified style of architecture





STREET SIGN IN WARSAW JEWISH SECTION BEFORE THE ERECTION
OF THE GHETTO WALLS .

The sign reads: "Epidemic Area. Only through traffic permitted."



"Jews who are not in possession of a special permit must report to the Krakow removal district of No 3 Pawiastrasse, in the following order:

"Jews whose names begin with the letters

A-D—December 2, 1940

E-J —December 4, 1940

K-O—December 6, 1940

P-T —December 9, 1940

U-Z—December 11, 1940

"(4) It is permitted to take only 25 kg of hand-baggage per person on leaving the city. All other Jewish property must be handed over for sale to the District Trust Office at 45, Westring, Krakow.

"The individual sale and purchase may take place only with the special permission of the Trust Office. Violations will lead to confiscation.

"(5) The fulfillment of this order will be strictly enforced.

"(6) This order takes effect on December 1, 1940."

Krakow, November 25, 1940

DR. WAECHTER

Governor.

Only 11,000 Jews were left in Krakow. They were not allowed to live in the districts previously inhabited by them, but had to live in Podgorze, across the Vistula, connected to the city by two bridges. It was not a Ghetto as yet, as the Jews were allowed to live on any street in the suburb and in the same houses as Poles, and there was no fence or wall around the district.

New oppressive regulations and decrees were issued against the Jews of Krakow, measures already familiar to the Jews of other localities. In October 1940 it was ordered that all Jewish stores must be kept open on *Rosh-Hashanah* and on the Day of Atonement and all orthodox Jews, including the rabbis, had to cut off their beards. Since April 3, 1940, the Jews had been barred from the use of buses, taxis and street cars.

As was the case in Warsaw, Lodz, Lublin and Kielce, the Jewish community of Krakow had to supply 3,000 Jewish workers daily for forced labor and to supply their food. This was a heavy financial burden on a community which had to help many of its members besides those engaged in forced labor for the Germans. The *Judenrat* taxed the well-to-do members of the community very heavily in order to be able

to carry on its program of social welfare and to maintain the laborers and their families

When the Germans proclaimed Krakow as the capital of the Gouvernement-General, transferring all central offices there, the Jewish Relief Committee of Krakow under the leadership of Dr. Chaim Hilfstein and Dr. Elijah Tisch, converted their organization into the Central Office of Jewish Social Self Help for the Government-General. The German press boasted of German efficiency in the treatment and "re-educating" of the Jews, taking credit for the exemplary orderliness of the work of the Jewish organization.

SEGREGATION AS SEEN BY NAZI JOURNALIST

Dr. Dietrich Raedeker writing in the *Warschauer Zeitung* of March 13, 1940, after a visit to Krakow, says: "The German people as a whole decided to take leave of the Jews and to shape its life independently of the life of the Jewish people. This resolution of the German people is a result of centuries of unfortunate experiences which proved the Jews, because of their hereditary traits, to be a calamity in our lives, because of their political, economic and cultural activities. The Jewish people stands in such sharp contrast to the German people that it is impossible to tolerate any contact between the two.

"We have drawn all conclusions from the separation of the two peoples. It is for that reason we have introduced the white armband with the blue Star of David which all Jews over 16 years of age must wear. It is for that reason we have segregated them in the street cars and intend to segregate them gradually in special sections where they will live only among themselves. But all that does not constitute any Jewish atrocity. We make no secret of the fact that we do not love the Jews. We should be extremely happy if we did not have any Jewish problem at all to solve.

"For hours we tramped in the mud of the Krakow Ghetto. Rickety stairs covered with dirt, creaked under our feet. Most of the Jewish residences are no cleaner. The uncleanness, rotten odor and suffocating air made us hold our noses. The torn and tattered bedding is not gray but black, and is covered by a thick layer of grease. One has a nauseating feeling in one's throat. The uncleaned windows are covered to the middle by rags which were once curtains. The latrine is so full of dirt the door cannot be closed. One may well ask: how can people live like that? If an epidemic should break out, it will find innumerable victims.

"The Jewish community of Krakow may in this respect be considered a pattern for the whole Gouvernement-General. It had had to carry out tasks of special difficulty in settling the Jews returned from the Poznan and the Lodz districts. There has been a 30% increase in the Jewish population in Krakow since the outbreak of the war, and the number of Jews in the city now amounts to some 80,000. Naturally the burden of settling and supporting the new arrivals, as well as the poor, falls in the first place on the well-to-do Jews. This is accomplished through the so-called *Kultus-Steuer*."

The cynical attempts by the Nazi journalist to blame the Jews for their own plight does not conceal the brutality of the Germans in their treatment of their victims. And even he could not help pay tribute to the marvelous work done by the Jewish relief agencies.

THE KRAKOW GHETTO

The description given by Dr. Raedeker of the Krakow Ghetto really applies to the Jewish section of Krakow at the time where there was no official and organized Ghetto in the city. One can well imagine what it was like when the real Ghetto was established and when the Germans began the deportation of the Jews..

On March 3, 1941,—that is, after the pogrom of December 1940 and after the first deportations—the German Governor of the Krakow district issued an order ordering all Jews living outside Podgorze to leave their dwellings and move to the few streets in that suburb set aside for the newly-created Ghetto. The poorest and filthiest streets of Podgorze—the Jozefinska, the Lwowska, the Brodzinska and Salinarna—were converted into a Ghetto, and all non-Jewish residents of those streets were given until March 20 to vacate their homes and move to other districts. The Jews were permitted to take along only 62½ lbs. of their possessions, and had to hand over the rest to the German Trust Office. The *Judenrat* undertook to distribute Jews in the dwelling places so that at least a window for light and air should be available for every three persons. The Ghetto was guarded by German police who barred non-Jews from entering it, and Jews from leaving its precincts except under guard on the way to forced labor.

For five months the Jews of the Krakow Ghetto were forbidden to have any communication with the outside world. Only in August 1941 was a Jewish post-office opened in Podgorze. During the months of September, October, November and December of 1941 many letters were received in America by relatives of Jews in the Krakow Ghetto,

"In June 1940 the German authorities announced that by August 15 of that year all Jews must leave Krakow. Numerous appeals and petitions made by individual Jews asking to be allowed to remain only brought the arrest of Biberstein, the head of the Jewish Community Council, who was sent, along with others of the Council, to Oswiecim. There they soon died. But the mass eviction was postponed several times. The last extension expired in February, 1941. The weeks immediately preceding that day were characterized by a brutal execution of the deportation policy. Jews were seized on the streets and taken to the railway station without a chance to gather any belongings or communicate with their families. The deportees were locked in freight cars without ventilation, water, food or sanitary facilities. They were sent to an unknown destination.

"Jews who voluntarily reported for deportation were permitted by the Germans to take with them hand-baggage amounting to 25 kilograms (62½ lbs.). Before I left Krakow, the remaining eleven or twelve thousand Jews were closed up in a Ghetto in Podgorze."

GHETTOS IN WESTERN GALICIA

In the other large cities of Western Galicia such as Rzeszow, Tarnow and Nowy Sacz, Ghettos were also introduced.

From only two of the smaller towns of that region is any information available. One is Oswiecim, seat of the notorious concentration camp to which many Jews were deported. The other is Bochnia, where the Germans introduced collective workshops for the Jews, which were, in fact, slave shops.

In Oswiecim, which is west of Krakow, there were 5,000 Jews before the war, most of them artisans and traders. On the eve of Passover 1940, when the Jews were preparing to celebrate the holiday, they were suddenly ordered to leave the town. The order was effective immediately, and no Jew was to remain in Oswiecim by the last day of Passover.

The Jewish Community Council of Sosnowiec, the neighboring town, then invited all Jews of Oswiecim to celebrate the Passover with them. The Council also sent the Jewish militia of the town of Oswiecim with wagons and a thousand volunteer workers to help carry out the deportation as efficiently as possible. The moving was done during the Passover week in several wagon-caravans, the Nazi authorities having forbidden the use of the railways. Some of the wagons were used to move the sick, the aged, and the small children; others were loaded with light

furnishings. The heavier furniture had to be left behind. The able-bodied had to make the journey on foot. The cobbled road from Oswiecim to Sosnowiec was for several days crowded with wandering Jews followed by a procession of small primitive wagons.

It transpired later that the expulsion was bound up with the Nazi plan to establish a concentration camp at Oswiecim, where thousands of Poles and Jews, mostly of the educated classes, were tortured, many of them to death.

Bochnia, which is 55 kilometers (about 35 miles) southeast of Krakow, had a Jewish population of 4,800 before the war. Out of 151 workshops and places of business in the town, 93 were in Polish hands and 58 in Jewish hands. Most of the Polish population of the district were employed in the salt mines. The Jews were generally artisans, tailors, shoemakers, basket-weavers, painters, tinsmiths, milliners, bakers, etc., working to supply the local market. A certain number of the Jewish establishments were immediately confiscated by the Germans and given to newly-arrived German traders. The Jewish artisans were driven from the market. On March 15, the Jews were isolated in a Ghetto into which they had been given twenty-four hours to move. Thenceforth they were forbidden to produce for the local market and were forced to work in the cooperative municipal workshops.

The following excerpt is taken from *Die Deutsche Zeitung* of Budapest, June 26, 1942: "The settlement of the Jewish problem was very difficult and required much deliberation, although the fundamental principle was quite simple. The solution of the problem was: the Jews must work. Where they appeared in such large masses as they did in the Gouvernement-General it was necessary to take into special consideration that the use of Jewish labor should not compete with non-Jewish handicraft.

"In Bochnia, the largest town in the Krakow district, that problem was solved in an exemplary manner by the establishment of municipal workshops.

"Work began in a tailoring shop which offered no competition to local tailors because into it were brought old articles of clothing which no non-Jewish tailor was willing to repair. By cutting and patching, the Jewish workshops made working clothes for the construction industries. Later workshops were established on the same principle in the shoe, basket, and brush, underwear, mattress, toy and box industries.

"Besides the construction industry and others similarly served by these workshops the goods were sold to certain traders and this arrangement kept the shops going at capacity production.

"Now there are 800 Jews working under the supervision of experts. So far they have, among other things, supplied the construction industries with 10,000 drill uniforms, 2,600 smocks and over 5,000 pairs of boots. Among the Jews employed in the workshops are former physicians, lawyers, and professional men, but for the most part, they are former traders."

The situation in the other towns of Western Galicia was not much better. In the towns and villages of the hilly Tatra district near the Czechoslovak border, the Jews were mercilessly driven out during the first few months of the war and driven into the Ghettos of Nowy-Sacz, Tarnow, and Rzeszow.

The largest Ghetto was in Nowy Sacz, since this town was nearest to the Tatra district and it is there that most of the Jews expelled from that district were sent. In fact, there were two distinct Ghettos in the town, one in the densely populated poor Jewish quarter, near the old *Judengasse*, and the other in the poor suburb of Pieklo. Visits could not be made between the Ghettos without a special pass.

In Tarnow the Ghetto contained about 40,000 Jews. Before the war many Jews of Tarnow were employed in the tailoring industry, working for the most part in the large shops. The clothing manufactured in Tarnow was of high quality and used to be shipped to Eastern Galicia, to Volhynia, to the Wilno province and even to the Zagłębie coal district. When the Germans entered Tarnow they took steps to exploit the renowned skill of the Jewish tailors to their own ends. They confiscated the factories, dismissed all Jews from administrative positions and put to work some 3,000 Jewish tailors at miserable pay and long hours at manufacturing clothes for the German army. Several thousand Jews were pressed into forced labor, while the others were left to die the slow death of starvation.

Suddenly the Germans decided that there were too many Jews in Tarnow, and they launched a series of deportations, attended by unspeakable brutality and bloodshed. The first deportation took place in May 1942.

According to a deposition made by a refugee to Palestine who was exchanged for a German, 10,000 of the 17,000 deported Jews were put in boxcars to be shipped to an unknown destination, while 7,000 considered physically unfit for labor, were taken into a nearby forest and machine-gunned. Only the "economically useful" Jews remained in Tarnow, numbering about 22,000, of whom there has been no report since. As is known to be the case in many other places, even the

"economically useful" Jews of Tarnow must have disappeared either by deportation or by mass-executions, since Tarnow was lately announced to be one of the cities in Poland which is now *Judenrein*.

THE LUBLIN RESERVATION

GERMAN anti-Semitism found in Polish Jewry—the largest Jewish community in Europe—the main target of its attacks. Its program of annihilation was later clearly revealed in the official Nazi press.

In the *Krakauer Zeitung* of April 2, 1941 an article by Dr. Sonnenfeld said: "Today our administration finds in the Jews not only an enemy it had hitherto known only in small groups or as individuals, but the deadly foe of the German nation and of National Socialism. Our government has already finished with that foe in Germany; now it will impose its will in the Eastern areas, especially here in the Government-General. The principal thing for us to know is what is to happen to the masses of Jews in this country; they will be ousted in order to liberate Europe for all time from this source of contamination."

In the conviction that by striking at Polish Jewry they were striking at the very heart of the Jewish people, the Nazi "experts" on the Jewish question, such as Dr. Joseph Goebbels and Alfred Rosenberg, evolved a plan to herd as many Jews as possible into one place so as to have them within easy reach, adding to the Polish Jews those Jews deported to Poland from other European countries.

Concentration was conceived as the first step to expulsion, which would be the fulfilment of Rosenberg's dream of "liquidating the Jewish problem" on a continental scale. In his address at a meeting of the *Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage* (as published in the *Krakauer Zeitung* of January 30 and 31, 1941) Rosenberg said: "For Germany the Jewish question will be solved when the last Jew has left the territory of the Greater Reich. For Europe it will be solved when the last Jew has left the European continent."

Rosenberg's idea of segregating the Jews by no means meant a Jewish state. He expressly declared that his proposal of a *Judisches Reservat* (Jewish reservation) had nothing to do with the Zionist idea of a *Judenstaat* (Jewish state). In a radio address delivered in Berlin on March 28, 1943 at the closing session of the *Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage*, he said: "This dream (of Zionism) is over. Now we

must decide where and how to dispose of the Jews. As I have said their settlement cannot be in the form of a Jewish state, but in the form which I will describe as a *Judisches Reservat*. It is to be hoped that the statesmen of the future will collaborate in continuing the settlement of the Jews under expert police supervision, so that the Jews may perform useful work which has hitherto been performed only by non-Jews."

What did Rosenberg really have in mind? Formerly when it seemed to the Nazis that they were about to conquer the world, plans were discussed for shipping all the Jews to some remote island; Nazi plans for the Jews still had at that time some semblance of "constructive" approach. In the first period of this war Rosenberg did not dare to speak openly of annihilation. America was still neutral, and American public opinion still had some weight in Berlin. Two years later, however, when the work of exterminating the Jews was already in full swing, Hitler said in his proclamation to the National Socialist Party (read on February 24, 1943 at a party meeting in Munich): "This struggle will not end as our enemies have planned, with the annihilation of the Aryan part of humanity, but with the extinction of Jewry in Europe."

Rosenberg's plan for a "reservation" was worked out even before the war began. On February 7, 1939, in addressing the foreign diplomats and representatives of the foreign press in Berlin, he dealt at length with the Jewish problem. "Only one question remains to be solved," he said in the course of his address, "what territories are the democracies willing to provide for the purpose of the settlement of some fifteen million Jews? To that end the Jewish millionaires and multimillionaires would have to place their means at the disposal of, let us say, the Office of the Evian Conference. If millions of Jews are to be settled, elementary humanity towards the Jews would demand that they should not be left to themselves, but that the colony be placed under administrators trained in police work. There is no question of establishing a Jewish state, but only of a Jewish reservation." (*Voelkischer Beobachter*, February 8, 1939.)

Behind this pretense of a project containing some appearance of decency and "humanitarianism" was a fiendish scheme for the brutal herding of all Jews in a so-called "reservation," in reality, a huge concentration camp.

Rosenberg's scheme began to be put into practice soon after the conquest of Poland. The area selected for the "reservation" was the town of Lublin with its ancient Jewish community numbering about 50,000 before the war, and the district around Lublin as far as Nisko on the

river San. No detailed plan for economic and social organization of the Jews herded into the area seemed to exist outside of the general plan outlined by Rosenberg, and German propaganda, usually so loquacious, was remarkably reticent about the Lublin reservation. Behind this silence was the terrible truth of the number of Jews who perished in the Ghettos and in the open camps on the arid plains.

The Black Book of Poland issued by the Polish Government in-Exile states: "It is significant that the Nazis themselves have written almost nothing about this 'reservation'. Only through neutral sources did it leak out that large numbers of Jews were being transferred from Western Poland, Bohemia and Austria to the Lublin area."

The Luxembourg German-language newspaper *Luxemburger Wort* of November 21, 1939, reported: "The haste with which the reservation has been established out of nothing leads to horrible conditions. Sometimes trains drive on for forty kilometers beyond Lublin and halt in the open country where the Jews alight with their luggage and have to find primitive accommodations for themselves in the surrounding villages. Up to November 10 about 45,000 Jewish men, women and children from Cieszyn, Bogumin, Morawska Ostrava, Prague, Pilsno and other towns of the Protectorate, and from Vienna and the new Reich provinces, Danzig-Westpreussen and Posen-Warthegau, have been sent to the reservation. Under the supervision of men of the S.S. Deathshhead Corps, the Jews are compelled to work at road-building, draining marshes and rebuilding the damaged villages. There is compulsory labor service for men up to the age of seventy and for women up to fifty-five."

As the Switzerland *Neue Zeitung* reported (November 1, 1939), the camps in which the Jews were herded were "completely isolated behind high barbed-wire fences and the Gestapo maintains a strict control over them."

Oswald Garrison Villard wrote in *The Spectator* of December, 1939: "What may prove to be the final act of the incredibly brutal and cruel tragedy which Adolf Hitler has inflicted on the Jews in his power is now going on, and without receiving the attention of the world as it should because of the pressure of war news. With practically no publication of the plan in the German newspapers, Adolf Hitler is going ahead with the creation of a so-called Jewish state, located in Poland, near Nisko on the San, south-west of Lublin. A stretch of land, about fifty by sixty miles in area, has been set aside. It is enclosed by a barbed-wire fence, and only the Jews will be allowed to live therein. Into this small territory are to be crammed no fewer than 1,945,000 Jews. What

is to become of the Poles who have inhabited this region is not stated, but it is said in various quarters that the land is exceptionally poor. Whether it is poor or rich, this mass-migration by force has begun now, in the dead of winter, and in a manner that cannot be interpreted as anything else than a determination to create, not a Jewish state, but a most horrible concentration camp, which can certainly become nothing else than a habitation of death. For these unfortunate people are forbidden to leave with more than 300 marks. They are permitted to take with them only such handbags as they can carry. All the rest of their belongings, the furniture in their apartments, the rest of their means, their jewelry, everything is stolen from them in the usual custom of men who declare that they belong to the purest and noblest strain of humanity the world has yet seen. No preparations are made for their reception; they are simply to be dumped in and left to shift for themselves. If they cannot find shelter in the deserted homes of the evacuated Polish peasantry, why, they can freeze to death or build new homes without means, without materials, without tools, without anything . . .

"It is impossible to conceive of any more barbarous cruelty, and it is deliberately calculated. Behind the barbed-wire fence the Jews are to live or to die in circumstances which would not be permitted in any civilized country if the victims were dogs or cattle."

Among the scant first-hand information we have on the Lublin reservation there is the report by S. Moldawer, a Jewish journalist who escaped from the Lublin area to Palestine. In *The Road to Lublin* (*Contemporary Jewish Record*, N. Y., March-April, 1940) he writes: "On November 2 (1939), I finally reached Lublin, the capital of the new Jewish state. . . . I have tried to write it a hundred times and a hundred times I have given up the task. I choose my words and set them down, but they are no more than the sounding of brass and the tinkling of cymbals. Were it a matter of art or talent, my task might have been easier; one could cudgel one's brain and exploit one's fancy. But there are things which happen so seldom; that is why they are so hard to tell. No pen wielded by man can tell even one-thousandth part of that horror which is Lublin.

"Lublin is a vale of sorrow. No human beings are they who walk its streets; all are phantoms, shadows, haunting a world that is no longer in existence. Nobody speaks in Lublin; nobody exchanges greetings. They have even ceased to weep. . . .

"Lublin has been turned into a vast concentration camp, the most terrible the world has ever seen. In normal times Lublin has a population of 72,000 Gentiles and 40,000 Jews. Today the number of Jews

cannot be computed, but it must run into at least 200,000, perhaps a quarter of a million. The congestion, the stench, the poverty, the disease and the chaos which reign in Lublin cannot be paralleled anywhere on earth. Men live in the streets, in cattle-stalls, in cellars, in carts and in the debris of devastated houses.

"Men die like flies in the thoroughfares, their bodies strewn on the roadway like old cinders. Shrouds are no longer used for the dead because none can be bought. At night everything is pitch black. The electric cables were smashed in the bombardment, and when they were later repaired there was no coal to keep the power station going. Chairs, wardrobes, even beds have long since been chopped up for firewood. Window-panes have been shattered, and there is no glass to mend them. The winds whistle through the desolate houses. Foodstuffs are unobtainable.

"The whole city is girt with barbed-wire fences, and the Nazis allow no traffic to pass through it. The water has turned foul and cannot be drunk. All the wells have become polluted. Cholera and typhus were already rampant when we reached Lublin. The Jewish engineers and technicians, the very ones who were ordered at Morawska-Ostrava to superintend the transport, have succeeded in clearing a space outside the city and in setting up a number of wooden huts as a protection from the cold. . . . The women band together and cook whatever they can gather. . . . The communal soup-kitchen, run by the Jewish authorities, can actually serve nothing but potato broth and stale, black bread, but this diet even succeeds in sustaining thousands of lives.

"Earlier arrivals begin to gather round in order to share the benefits of our efforts. All are in the sorriest plight, victims of the most wretched destitution. Hundreds have not slept for weeks, cramped and confined in noisy freight cars. They wander about sad-eyed and distraught, like mourners at funerals. Many of them are alone, their wives and children having been killed in the bombardment. Brothers and sisters come without parents, wives without husbands, little children without father or mother, left utterly desolated in a brutal and rapacious world.

"One thing only is as clear as the day: the devil himself could not have devised such hell. The seven tortures of the damned are there before your eyes. Lublin is a giant concentration camp where people spend their days trying to dig their way out of a living grave. Unobserved by the guards in and around Lublin, thousands of men, mostly youngsters, take their lives in their hands and try to escape from this Ghetto hell. Most of them make their way across the Soviet border, hiding in the fields by day and creeping on all fours by night. It takes them

a week or more, but as a rule they get through. There were, however, exceptions. Sometimes the patrols catch them and then these deserters, as they are called, are invariably shot."

Lublin was a "reception" center for the whole area into which Jews from the "dejudaized" towns of occupied Poland incorporated into the Region were brought and sent away to the localities fenced off for the "reservation." As many as 100,000 transient Jews were heided at one time in Lublin and the Ghetto was overcrowded with them. The correspondent of the Swiss *Neue Zeitung*, who visited Lublin in 1942 wrote:

"Thousands are housed in catacombs without access to fresh air and in almost complete darkness. The misery and the filth in which the Jews are compelled to live is almost beyond imagination. . . . The houses are small and dilapidated, and some have signs at the entrances warning of infectious diseases. As I was standing on the street watching a Jewish peddler sell rotten food, I heard a moaning voice from a low cellar window begging me to move away because I was shutting out the one ray of light coming through the window into the cellar. I entered the house and found in the dark, damp cellar a family of four. The furniture consisted of two small chairs, a rickety bench, two mattresses on the bare floor, and a few cooking utensils. To my astonishment I found another family living in a basement under the cellar without any daylight at all."

This was the last chapter in the story of the Lublin Reservation. The epilogue came very soon when in March 1942, the whole project was dropped and the Jews were expelled from the city and the district of Lublin. It cannot be said that the plan failed, because there really was no attempt to evolve a working plan for a true settlement of the Jews in the Lublin area. According to reports published in the *Gazeta Zydowska*, the only Polish-language Jewish newspaper in Poland published with the consent of the Nazis, the Lublin settlers had not been provided with any means for supporting themselves or for productive work and were kept alive only by the meager contributions of the pauperized Jewish communities in the neighborhood.

As in all other places under Nazi occupation the Jews were driven to physical and moral exhaustion by forced transportation under the most inhuman conditions, and by humiliation, torture, hunger and the complete lack of sanitary living conditions. That was the objective, and as soon as it was reached the liquidation of the "reservation" was begun by the dynamiting of the Lublin Ghetto. In a statement at a press conference at the British Ministry of Information on July 9, 1942,

Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, Vice-Premier of the Polish Government-in-Exile in London, gave the following information: "On the night of March 23-24, 1942, all Jews in the district of Lublin were driven from their homes. The sick and the disabled were killed on the spot. 108 children, from 2 to 9 years old, were taken from a Jewish orphanage, led to the outskirts of the town, and murdered with their nurses. 2,500 people were massacred that night; the remaining 26,000 Jews were removed to a concentration camp at Belzec and Trawniki.

A report from the underground movement corroborates: Mr. Mikolajczyk's statement: "In March the city of Lublin was purged of its Jewish population. Again children and adults, the sick in the hospitals and numberless other inhabitants of the Ghetto were murdered. The number of victims in the Ghetto alone was over 2,000. In addition, 25,000 Jews were taken from Lublin to an 'unknown destination.' Another 3,000 were put in barracks in the Majdan Tatarski, a suburb of Lublin. There are no longer any Jews in Lublin."

LWOW AND THE EASTERN
GALICIAN PROVINCE

BEFORE THE OUTBREAK of the war the eastern region of Galicia, or Eastern Little Poland, as it was called, contained a Jewish population of more than 600,000 people. This was approximately 75% of the total Jewish population in the whole of Galicia. The centralization of compact masses of Jews in the eastern part of Little Poland dates back to the days prior to the partition of Poland.

Many of the major wholesale business undertakings and practically all the retail trade in eastern Galicia was centered in Jewish hands. It was also the Jews who originally developed and until the war practically dominated the textile trade. The Jews were also a powerful factor in the limited industrial life of Little Poland. Moreover, they made their influence particularly felt in the so-called "home-industries" of the southeastern regions.

The eastern Galician Jews had, comparatively speaking of course, a fair representation in agriculture. The number of Jewish landowners, farmers, farm workers and peasants who depended solely, or partly, on agricultural pursuits for their livelihood constituted, even as recently as the period prior to the outbreak of the war, almost 10% of the entire Jewish population.

From the cultural point of view this community of 600,000 Jews was among the richest of all the eastern-European communities. Eastern Galicia was the cradle of *Hassidism*, a movement which sought to spread among the masses comradeship between man and man, religious ecstasy and the concept of salvation of Israel through faith. Eastern Galicia was also the center of the *Haskalah* movement whose object it was to bring to the Jews the enlightenment of modern European civilization. It was also among the eastern Galician Jews that the modern social movements, such as Zionism and Socialism, which were emerging among the Jews during the turn of the century, found their most enthusiastic followers.

The eastern Galician Jewish settlement is over 700 years old and its earliest Jewish community was the one founded in the city of Lwow as far back as the 13th century. Lwow was the home of many modern and ancient Jewish synagogues, of Jewish libraries, schools, theatres, art centers, trade schools, trade unions, and financial institutions.

The Tzarist Russian occupation in the First World War with all its consequences of death and destruction, the ensuing evacuation of Jews into Russia, the battles between Poles and Ukrainians during 1918-1919—all these had left deep economic and psychic wounds on the Jewish population. But hardly had normalcy been established when the present World War broke out in 1939, and again they were subjected to a chain of horrors. The retreat and later the collapse of the Polish armies, the conflagrations caused by the Nazi armies in their push to the east, those were the conditions faced by eastern Galician Jewry and the 200,000 refugees from other sections, during the first three weeks of the war before the Red Army occupied eastern Galicia. For twenty-two months the Jews and the rest of the population in eastern Galicia lived under Soviet rule, and were able to escape the brutalities of the Hitlerite hordes. True enough, as city dwellers with a large middle class—professionals, merchants, and manufacturers—it was hard for the Jewish population to immediately adjust itself, particularly during a war period, to a new mode of life and to a new political regime. But under the pressure of necessity most of them made the adjustment, while waiting patiently for the termination of the war and the return of normal conditions. During this period, however, thousands of them suffered the enormous hardships of the deportations to Siberia carried out by the Soviet authorities.

HORRORS OF GERMAN OCCUPATION

But instead of the "normal conditions" to which they had so fervently been looking forward, came the sudden German attack on Russia on June 22, 1941. With this attack began a new and sad chapter in the life of eastern Galician Jewry, a chapter of death and destruction, of humiliation and total extermination. The German hordes had already had two years of experience in the art of exterminating Jews. They enlisted the aid of the local Ukrainian population whom they inoculated with the most virulent anti-Jewish propaganda. Thus a new wave of horrors began in the life of the eastern Galician Jewish settlement—a chapter of famine, death, epidemics, pogroms, torture, deportations and Ghettos—the purpose of which was to completely exterminate all the Jews.

By an administrative decree declaring eastern Galicia as a part of the General Government, the Jews automatically became subject to the special laws which had been introduced into occupied Poland. Jewish Ghettos were established in all larger cities and in all towns with fairly large Jewish communities. Originally the plan was to have all Jews concentrated in Ghettos not later than December 14, 1941. But the practical difficulties encountered in the task of transferring such huge masses of people, particularly in Lwow, compelled the Nazis to extend the fulfillment of the decree to February 28, 1942.

As soon as the Germans entered Lwow on March 20, 1942, they arrested 500 prominent Jews as hostages and imposed a penalty tax of twenty million rubles on the Jewish community. Although the Jews paid the tax, the Nazis nevertheless failed to free the 500 hostages, among whom were such prominent Jews as Dr. Dawid Schreiber, former member of the Polish Senate; Jacob Bodek, former Sejm-deputy; Dr. Henryk Hescheles, editor of *Chwila*, (Moment) a Polish-language Zionist daily; and Dr. Rosenfeld, Zionist youth leader. The hostages were later deported to some unknown destination.

Aside from imposing heavy taxes on the Jews, the Nazis removed from Jewish synagogues, schools and private homes all metal objects including candlesticks and chandeliers, for use as scrap in war industries. They also ordered the Jewish community to deliver 50,000 prayer-shawls to the army, where they were used to make sweaters for the soldiers.

After collecting the tax the Nazis issued a decree devaluating the Russian ruble, the official currency. The result was that the Jews who had been living on their savings became impoverished.

Then began a series of anti-Jewish decrees. Jews in Lwow were compelled to paint a large yellow Star of David on the front walls of their homes. Special street cars were introduced for Jews.

The Nazis then proceeded to round up all the Jews in eastern Galicia for forced labor, compelling them to repair roads, bridges and railways. All this work had to be performed without pay, and the workers had to depend for their subsistence upon aid given them by local Jewish charity organizations.

According to the decree by which the Ghetto in Lwow was established, no Jewish storekeeper was permitted to transfer his business or store to the Ghetto area. Jewish storekeepers were compelled to abandon their stores and shops and move into the Ghetto.

On September 16, 1941 a Stockholm newspaper carried a report to the effect that all Jewish goldsmiths, watchmakers, smelters and metal

workers in eastern Galicia had been compelled to turn over to the Nazi authorities whatever tools and materials they had in their workshops. They were also forbidden to sell any of the material to private persons or to transfer them from one city to another.

GHETTOS IN EAST GALICIA

Ghettos were set up in the following cities: Lwow, Zloczow, Kolo-myja, Stryj, Stanislawow, Tarnopol, Czortkow, Brzezany, Rawa-Ruska, Sambor, Boryslaw and Drohobycz. Foremost among them, although second in the sequence of establishment, was the Lwow Ghetto where 120,000 Jews were compressed into an area formerly occupied by only 20,000 people. The Ghetto extended from Krakowski Square through Kazimierzowska down to Rappoport Street, to the poor and congested Jewish section known as the Szul Plac and right through Zolkiewska Street. No Jew was permitted to appear on the public streets after 8 o'clock in the evening.

Apart from the above mentioned Ghettos the Nazi authorities in November 1942, also designated 20 cities and towns where Jews were permitted to live in special areas or sections. These were: Przemyśl, Bobrka, Rudki, Grodek-Jagiellonski, Jaryczow, Sokal, Busko, Lubaczow, Jaworow, Rohatyn, Podhajce, Bukaczowce, Zbaraz, Zborow, Trembolwa, Skalat, Buczacz, Borszczow, Kopyczynce and Tluste.

After the Ghettos were established the Nazis began a systematic looting of all Jewish property throughout all the cities, towns and hamlets of eastern Galicia, confiscating everything from merchandise and jewelry to furniture and apparel, and whatever property had not previously been taken.

"EXTERMINATION SQUADS"

Early in 1942 the Germans brought down special "extermination squads," consisting of Nazi troops, for the purpose of pogromizing the Jewish population with the aid of the Ukrainians. The first pogrom took place in Lwow, and lasted for three days. It was conducted by pogrom-gangs under the direction of the local chief of the Gestapo and resulted in the death of thousands of Jews and in the destruction of countless Jewish homes.

This execution squad was not subject to the jurisdiction of the local occupation force. It functioned instead under the supervision of the Gestapo which in turn was directly responsible to the highest administrators of the Berlin *Sonder Dienst* (Special Service).

The Gestapo chief then proceeded to raid other areas where he led the execution squads in bloody pogroms against Jews. The first city to feel the Nazi fury was Drohobycz where early in February, 1943, an unparalleled massacre of the Jewish population was carried out. From there the execution squads proceeded to Stanislawow, Kolomyja, and other towns and cities.

In the city of Stanislawow, according to a report in the London *Daily Telegraph*, the Nazis rounded up all Jews on the Jewish cemetery and while Ukrainian and Lithuanian gangs were busy looting Jewish homes they proceeded with a mass execution of more than 3,000 Jews, burying them all in a common grave. The Jews remaining were deported for forced labor on the German-Russian front. The only Jews escaping either death or forced labor were those whom the Nazis considered "economically useful."

Mass executions also took place in Tarnopol, Brzezany and Zloczow. In those cities alone more than 11,000 Jews were slain. On a somewhat lesser scale pogroms took place in every city, town and hamlet where Jews could be found.

Of the 27,000 Jews who formerly lived in Przemysl, 1,000 escaped when the Soviet forces abandoned the city and 2,000 were slain by the special Nazi execution squads. Those remaining were confined in the Ghetto in June 1942, with death as the penalty for attempting to escape.

EPIDEMICS AND HUNGER

In Tarnopol the Nazis established a concentration camp for Russian war prisoners. Towards the end of 1941 a typhus epidemic broke out in the concentration camp from which it spread like wildfire to the Jewish quarters. Owing to the shortage of doctors and medical equipment in the Jewish Ghetto the epidemic exacted a heavy toll of Jewish victims.

Several months thereafter, in March 1942, when Germany was making its preparations for the spring offensive against Russia, a decree was issued ordering the complete evacuation of all Jews from Tarnopol. All Jews who had survived the epidemic were placed in concentration camps where, according to a report in a Stockholm newspaper of March 18, 1943, most of them were brutally slain.

As time went on Nazi cruelty grew in intensity, scope and method. In Lwow, for instance, there existed eight free Jewish kitchens. In December, 1941 the Nazis ordered five of them closed down despite the fact that the reduced number was not sufficient to meet the needs of a

starving population. They also seized all Jewish synagogues and used them for quartering the German troops.

Early in 1942 when the typhus epidemic was raging in Lwow more than 500 Jews died through the lack of adequate medical care.

ATROCITIES IN SEALED AREA

According to a report cabled from Stockholm to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency on February 3, 1943, the Nazis, using the pretext that a Jewish youth had attacked a German soldier in Lwow, ordered the seizure and execution of ten Jewish hostages, among whom was included Dr. Landsberg, President of the local Jewish community. Dr. Landsberg was hanged on the porch of his home to intimidate the population.

The Nazis hermetically sealed the eastern Galician region and no news was able to trickle out to the rest of the world. No newspaper published in Lwow was permitted to reach the outside world. It was from Berlin newspapers, whose correspondents visited the region, that the outside world was first able to get a glimpse of conditions there. Quite characteristic of the German accounts is the following dispatch which appeared in the Nazi newspaper *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* from Ludwig Miesser, one of its correspondents who traveled through eastern Galicia:

"The elderly Jews of Lwow clean streets, clean and polish street-cars and buses, remove the debris of shattered buildings and do other compulsory labor. The young and physically stronger Jews are taken every morning from the Ghettos and are led by Jewish and Ukrainian guards to do forced labor in factories and on the roads and to repair bridges and highways. The Jews are required to bring their own tools such as spades, hammers, and other paraphernalia. The city of Lwow has 40% Jews, 40% Poles and 20% Ukrainians and other nationals."

Were it not for the fact that a few Jews living in the Carpathian regions near the Hungarian border managed, at great risk, to cross the border over to Hungary whence, after long and risky journeys, they reached Palestine, knowledge of many of the Nazi atrocities would never have reached the outside world.

In the light of these reports made to the Committee for Polish Jews, it becomes evident that the unbelievable stories which had been leaking out from various sources concerning the havoc and destruction which the Nazis wrought upon the eastern Galician settlement were true.

Thus, for instance, the Polish newspaper *Wiesci Polskie*, published

in Budapest, Hungary, carried a news report on September 6, 1942 to the effect that not a single Jew was any longer to be found in the entire region between Delatyn and Worochta lying in the Prut valley in the Carpathian mountains. Most of the Jews of Delatyn, Jaremcze, Mikulicz, Dora and Worochta were slain by the Nazis, and the few who survived the slaughter were driven into concentration camps.

At the same time the Nazi newspaper *Warschauer Zeitung* reported: "It may sound incredible, but it is nevertheless wonderful, that Przemysl is completely devoid of Jews now."

According to a statement made by a Jewish woman who reached Palestine in an exchange for German citizens, Lwow had only 20,000 Jewish residents left in October, 1942. Only those Jews capable of doing manual labor remained, the others, including children under the age of 12, were all put to death.

On March 5, 1943 the Jewish Telegraphic Agency published a detailed report describing the annihilation of the large Jewish community in Kolomyja. Following are some excerpts of that report:

"The horrible story of how the Nazis executed 58,000 Jews in Kolomyja, eastern Galicia, and how they set the Jewish Ghetto there in flames was recounted today to Jewish organizations by one who had himself witnessed the destruction of the Jewish population of Kolomyja.

"Thousands of Jews were burned alive when forced to leap naked into flaming fires. Others were driven into the forest where they were shot to death by Nazi firing squads. After witnessing 150 Jews shot before his eyes, the chairman of the Jewish community, Horowitz, committed suicide in the presence of the Gestapo. In order to make certain that not a single Jew would remain there, the Nazis sent the entire Jewish Ghetto up in flames.

"When the German army entered Kolomyja, the witness related, there were 58,000 Jews there. On October 12, 1941, the Nazis drove 3,400 Jews into the nearby forest at Szczepanowicze and executed them all with machine guns. On November 6, the Nazis seized 500 Jews in the Moka section of Kolomyja and, using the excuse that a Jewish family had been concealing an anti-Nazi agitator, drove them into the forest and shot them all to death.

"Since then, related the eye-witness, the shooting of Jewish hostages became a daily occurrence. By September, 1942 only 8,000 Jews remained in the Ghetto of Kolomyja. The other 50,000 had all been liquidated.

"On September 7, 1942 the Nazis rounded all the 8,000 Jews into

one place and, after sending 1,700 of them back home, they ordered the remaining ones to undress and to turn their clothing and shoes over to the Gestapo guards. The naked Jews were then loaded into trucks and deported to Rawa-Ruska where they were all burnt alive.

"After having exterminated the local Jewish population, the Nazis transferred to Kolomyja many Jews from the surrounding towns and villages. When, in October 4, 1942, the Jewish population in Kolomyja reached 6,000 the Nazis again seized 5,700 of them and, loading them in trucks, sent them off to Rawa-Ruska where they were burnt alive.

"On September 5, 1942 the Gestapo chief summoned Mr. Horowitz, the chairman of the Jewish community, and asked him to reveal the whereabouts of Jews who had allegedly been hiding themselves. No longer able to bear the horrible ordeal Mr. Horowitz committed suicide.

"In order to avenge the stubbornness of the community chairman, the Gestapo chief arrested 1,200 Jews and had them all shot in the forest of Szczepanowicze. But several hundred Jews were still left in the Ghetto, having so hidden themselves that even the Gestapo was unable to find them. To make certain that no Jews remained alive the Gestapo ordered the entire Ghetto razed in flames, turning the entire Ghetto into one heap of ashes."

The New York office of the World Jewish Congress received a report from a reliable person in one of the neutral countries in Europe on conditions in Poland. The report stated that a well-known Aryan personality who had arrived from Poland in August 17, 1942 said that "during the first four weeks alone the Nazis slew 50,000 Jews in Lwow, 15,000 in Stanislawow, 4,000 in Zlocow and 4,000 in Brzezany and that horrible massacres had also taken place in Kolomyja, Sambor, Stryj, Zbaraz, Tarnopol, Zborow, Drohobycz, Przemyśl, Kutu, Sniatyn, Zaleszczyki, Brody, Przemyślany, Rawa-Ruska, Sasow, and in other towns and villages."

WILNO AND THE EASTERN POLISH PROVINCES

THERE is a legend that the famous Gaon of Wilno gave to the Jews of Wilno the blessing of preserving the Jewish spirit and the Jewish tradition and of spreading them all over the world.

In Jewish history Wilno occupies a special place. From its beginnings in the 14th century, Wilno had been a Jewish spiritual center. Situated at the crossroad of two civilizations—Western European and Eastern European—Wilno was the bridge between the two centers of Jewish culture.

The Jewish population of Wilno was 70,000; in the Wilno district the Jewish population amounted to almost 200,000.

The city was rich in synagogues and religious schools; here was located the famous *Ramajles Yeshivah* which was attended by students from countries all over the world. It had many prominent rabbis and students in the field of Jewish religion, and the religious authority of its representatives was recognized everywhere.

On the old Jewish cemetery of Wilno rest the remains of many prominent Jewish scholars, among them the *Gaon*. There too rest the remains of Ger Cedek Potocki, a Polish count and one of the romantic figures of the Polish Renaissance, who adopted Judaism.

A high standard of religious study was maintained in the Hebrew schools and seminaries. The Zionist movement had many followers. There were many special Jewish cultural and scientific institutions which served as examples for world Jewry.

In Wilno was founded and developed *Hilf durch Arbeit* (Help through Work), a special seminary for professional education which enjoyed a wide reputation for the high level of its standards.

Another similar institution was the Jewish *Technicum*, with Yiddish as the language of instruction. The attachment to Yiddish in Wilno was so great that a Jewish High School was established where the curriculum was in Yiddish. The unusual high standard of this establishment led to the decision of the Polish Government to

grant the school full legal rights and its graduates received the same degrees as were granted in Polish schools.

The most creative achievement of Wilno Jewry was the establishment of the Jewish Scientific Institute which became an authority in the field of Jewish science and knowledge.

Many famous artists made their first appearance in Wilno, among them the famous sculptor Antokolski and the great violin virtuoso Jasha Haifetz. Music, literature, painting and the theatre were under the patronage of special institutions founded for the purpose. Wilno was renowned for its Jewish Musical Institute, the only one of its kind in the world, and for the Wilno Art Society (*Kunst Gezelschaft*). The first named was a Conservatory for Music where the talents of the gifted Jewish youth could be developed. The first opera in Yiddish was presented in Wilno.

In order to make education and research available to the Jewish youth a Jewish popular university, *Wilbig* (*Wilner Bildungs Gezelschaft*) was founded there.

The most famous Jewish theatrical group in Europe and in the United States was *Di Wilner Yiddishe Trupe*. The Jewish theatre in Wilno served as an inspiration for the Jewish masses and a mirror of its spiritual tendencies and aspirations.

Besides these cultural institutions, Wilno took pride in its centers devoted to the health hygiene of the Jewish population. This was accomplished through the social work of the *TOZ* Organization (formerly known as *OSE*), which administered many institutions, children colonies, a hospital for those afflicted with tuberculosis and a dispensary. They succeeded in reducing infant mortality and combating tuberculosis and in propagating prophylactic care among the Jewish masses. There was a school for nurses based on American principles and techniques.

Although unfavorable conditions hampered its economical development, Wilno was a prominent industrial and business center. Lumber mills flourished together with the various commercial enterprises connected with the industry. The fame of its linen industry was carried far beyond its borders. The fur and leather industries occupied a prominent place, especially the fur industry which occupied an important position in the world fur industry. Wilno became the permanent site of the International Fur Fair. The Kurland Oil Refinery and the prosperous radio firm *Elektryt*—one of the largest centers of production in Poland—were well known.

OUTRIGHT SLAUGHTER

For a year and nine months while the helpless Jews of Western and Central Poland were being coldly and scientifically herded into Ghettos, labor camps and concentration camps, there to be ruthlessly slaughtered in accordance with the expressed plan of the Nazi masters, the tens of thousands of Jews who had fled to the north-eastern regions of Poland found a temporary respite from annihilation together with the more than 200,000 Jews who lived in Wilno, Bialystok, Grodno, Lomza and the other cities of the region. On September 17, 1939, seventeen days after the German march into Poland, the armies of the Soviet had advanced westward to the famous "Ribbentrop Line" and the Russians remained in control until June 1941, when, immediately after the outbreak of the Russo-German war, the Nazi armies rolled over the rest of Poland and deep into the heart of Russia itself.

With the German occupation of north-eastern Poland began a period of Jewish suffering and torment without parallel in human history. Only the historian of the future will be able to present in all its unremitting horror the details of the mass-murders and merciless slaughters of the Jewish population.

Here there was none of the German pretense of legality, decrees, ordinances, subterfuges and explanations. Here there was nothing but remorseless and outright murder. Guns were trained on helpless infants and naked civilians as though they were regiments of enemy troops disputing a fortified point. This was the final flowering of the German policy towards the Jews, annihilation without warning or preparation, cynical, brutal and contemptuous.

Dr. Robert Ley, chief of the German Labor Front, toured the region around Grodno and Bialystok. There he delivered speeches which proclaimed the keynote of the Nazi policy towards the Jews. "The Jews," said Dr. Ley, "are the chosen people alright—but for extermination purposes only."

Only a trickle of information reached the outside world of the abominations being inflicted by the Nazis and their Lithuanian, White Russian and Ukrainian quisling-fascist hirelings. But even this trickle reveals the pattern of the destruction of a population. In December 1941, Dr. I. Schwarzbart, member of the Polish National Council in London, made the following statement:

"The most horrible news of cold-blooded slaughter reaches us constantly, but the news which has recently reached London surpasses in horror anything in the annals of barbarism. It is difficult to believe

these facts, yet they are true. I wish to give you some details of the catastrophe, the ocean of suffering, which has befallen a nation with thousands of years of history.

"In Wilno, out of a Jewish population of 70,000, about 15,000 remain alive. These are artisans, kept alive because Hitler needs them. All the others, about 50,000, were slaughtered by the Germans and Lithuanians in the Ponary mountains.

"In Pinsk the Germans slaughtered about 8,000 Jews between the ages of 16 and 60.

"At first about 3,000 Jews were taken from their homes to the villages of Halewo and Zapole, and were there ordered to dig their graves and stand in front of them. Then machine guns were turned on them. On another occasion between 4,000 and 5,000 Jews were taken from the city; no trace was ever found of them.

"In Brzesc 6,000 Jews were slaughtered. In Janow about 300 Jews were killed. In Homek the entire Jewish population was wiped out. In Motol, Jews, including children, were slaughtered. In Kobryn, Jews were driven out of their homes and the entire Jewish district was set on fire. In Włodzimierz thousands of Jews were murdered and buried in mass graves. In Bialystok there was a mass-execution of Jews, irrespective of age or sex. In Lomza about 1,800 Jews were killed. In Czyzew Szlachecki, near Lomza, about 8,000 Jews were driven into anti-tank trenches and machine-gunned. The trenches became their mass-graves."

The pitiful remnants of the Jewish population in the larger cities, such as Wilno, Bialystok and Pinsk, were herded into Ghettos and the confined areas hermetically sealed. Infrequent reports reaching the outside world tell the harrowing story. A report received by the Institute for Jewish Affairs in New York, states:

"Except for the Ghettos in Wilno, Bialystok and Grodno, there are no Jews left. This year, the massacres of Jews were carried on in territories under White-Russian administration. Jews were murdered there as ruthlessly as in any other place. It seems that it had been done by Lithuanians during their guest-performances. Anyway, it is sure that the Lithuanians were active in Woronowo (Baranowicze) where on that occasion also 30 Poles were slain, and in Lida. It seems that that action is not yet completed. The Jews in the Ghettos survive for the time being, paying for their lives by working for the Germans and the city administration. Many Jews succeeded in escaping to the woods and Jewish youth, having fled from the Ghetto fearing forced labor or death, joined the guerilla formations.

"There is the naked, primitive fight for one's life on the one hand and the unprecedented beastliness and perfidy on the other. There are no chances of the extermination policy towards the Jews to slacken, the Lithuanian methods were accepted and included into the repertoire of German measures, while the Ukrainians and White-Russians readily undertook to carry out that policy. One Jewish center after another undergoes liquidation by the usual means. In the Bialystok district the Ghettos in Bialystok and Grodno still exist, the Jews buying their lives, it is said, by bribes of textiles and clothes to the army, as long as their stock will suffice. Maybe a contributing fact is that in these two cities the Germans do not find elements ready to carry out the execution and do not want to do the dirty job themselves. It is difficult to estimate how strong the Jewish element will be after the war and in what psychological state. Very many Jews are hiding among Aryans, many emigrated in the year 1939-1940, many left together with the retiring Soviet troops"

CHAPTER EIGHT

EXTERMINATION

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

THE segregation of the Jewish population in the Ghettos, the gradual reduction of its biological potential through undernourishment, the exhaustion of its vital energies and the weakening of its nervous system by humiliation and mortal terror did not constitute the "final solution of the Jewish problem," as was emphasized from time to time by some Nazi publicists. The establishment of conditions for existence of the Jewish population on the lowest level, below the minimum human needs, did not mark the end of the persecution of the Polish Jews by the Nazis. The Ghetto was not yet the actual "dead-end" to which the whole Jewish question was relegated, although in the first months of 1941 it could have been presumed, in the face of some Nazi declarations, that the life of Polish Jewry would be stabilized in the lowest depths of human misery—the Ghettos.

At that time the Nazi publicists still continued their efforts to justify German administrative measures in relation to the Jews, and to explain them as hygienic, economic and political expediences. Characteristic of this attitude was the article of Robert Greiff in the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* of March 29, 1941. The article stated that three reasons compelled the administration of the General Government to "regulate" the problem of the Jews. The reasons given were: (1) Considerations of health; the Jews, who show no concern about the hygienic conditions of their persons and dwellings, were the chief carriers of disease; (2) Economic considerations; the effective carrying on of war industrial establishments required the exclusion of Jews from economic life; (3) Political considerations; Jewish influences had a detrimental effect on the loyal attitude of Poles to the German administration. Robert Greiff emphasized that the Jewish problem in the General Government had different features from that in the Reich. In Germany, said Greiff, the Jew was an isolated phenomenon, although he often occupied influential positions, whereas in the General Government the Jews lived in large numbers. Without explaining how the authorities intended to

solve the problem, he stated that it must be solved, and that the administration was already working on it. Already the Jews had been separated from the Polish community by the creation of Jewish quarters. . . .

Such arguments would seem to imply that the Ghetto system would be continued, but already in the Spring of 1941 scattered acts of mass-terror began to indicate that some change in the policy towards the Jews was in preparation and that the gradual and relatively slow liquidation would give way to the new conceptions of speedy and radical extermination. It is clear that the cause of the change in tactics could not be ascribed to the initiative of the local authorities, but was to be found elsewhere in the governing circles, and obviously in the designs of Hitler himself.

In the Spring of 1941 German propaganda suddenly began to tighten the screws of anti-Semitism. In the speeches of Hitler, in the articles and statements of Goebbels and Rosenberg, the alleged responsibility of the Jews for the war was emphasized with growing intensity. Alfred Rosenberg in a speech delivered on March 28, 1941, before the *Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage*, presented a comprehensive program for the complete "clearance" of the Reich and Europe from the Jews and put the "Jewish question" ahead of all European political problems of that time. In this speech, full of familiar anti-Semitic nonsense about the international conspiracy of the Jews against other nations, he attacked with special vehemence the alleged Jewish influence on the policy of England and the United States. "In this work of purification," shouted Rosenberg, "Roosevelt and his Baruch and his Jew-Hollywood culture will not disturb us." This program of clearance planned the expulsion of all Jews from Europe to some reservation and it was expected that the task would take from ten to twenty years.

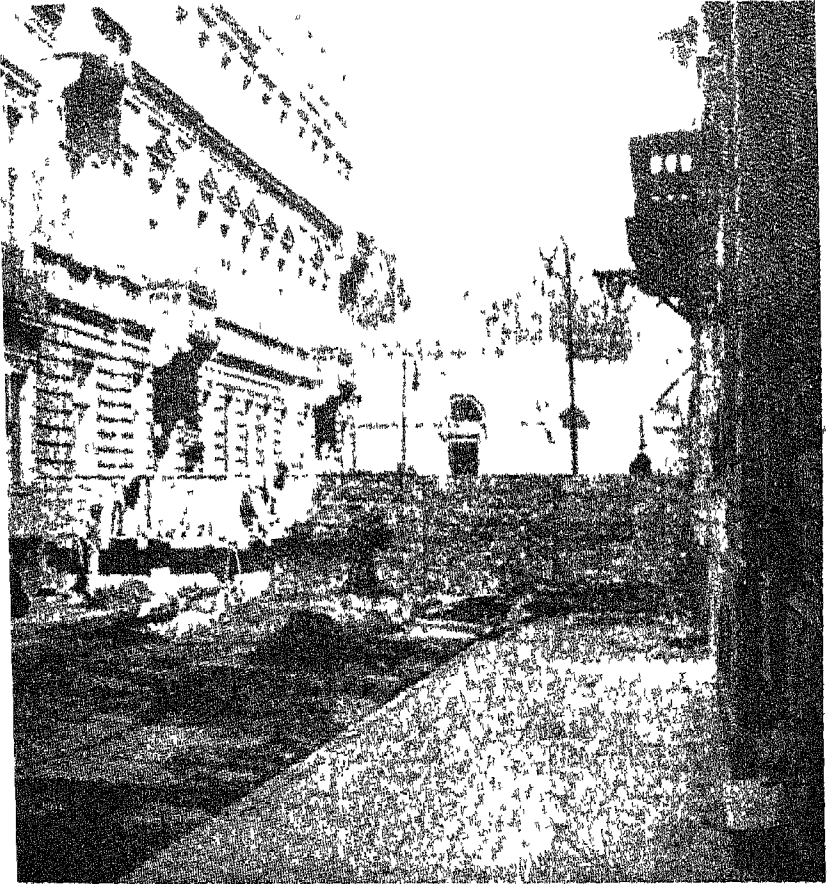
Whereas in previous German statements made in 1940 immediately after the occupation of the European continent, the Nazis expressed the opinion that European Jewry was finally rendered harmless by the measures of the German authorities, and that the "foe" was already crushed, in the Spring of 1941 the Jewish bogey was again highlighted in German propaganda. Just as in the speech of Rosenberg, the statements of Hitler and Goebbels aimed to renew the old anti-Semitic attempt to present the Jews as a dangerous international power handling the controls of the democratic world in the war against Germany. Dragging out this bogey undoubtedly constituted a prologue to the new spectacle which was being prepared to exhibit the bogey of Bolshevism. Already at this time in Hitler's headquarters plans for the invasion of

Russia were drawn up, and the work of organizing the crusade against the "Jewish-Soviet State" was in full swing

This sudden emphasis on the anti-Jewish elements in German propaganda showed clearly that Hitler's political and strategical plan conceived the raising of the Jewish question as a trump-card—first of all in the diplomatic offensive preceding the assault on Soviet Russia, and then as a means of blackmailing the democratic nations in the course of the Russian campaign. The aim of the diplomatic offensive in the Spring of 1941 was to win England over to the crusade prepared by Hitler against Russia. In accordance with the Nazi theory of the overwhelming influence of Jewish financial circles on England's policy, the threat of the horrible fate awaiting their brethren in the occupied countries should induce the Jews to use pressure on English public opinion and the British government. These arguments were strengthened by a series of anti-Jewish atrocities, which were no more than deliberate moves in the German diplomatic game preceding the war against Russia, in order to create a background for the diplomatic peace-feelers sent out to determine if a negotiated peace with England was feasible—as was the intention in the English mission of Rudolph Hess.

Since the entire game was frustrated, and the flight of Hess ended so miserably, the first diplomatic prologue to the invasion of Russia was over, with the free Jewish world linked together with the United Nations against the Nazis. On June 22, 1941, the German hordes struck at Russia. Now the two bogeys, Jewish and Bolshevist, were coupled together. This was done in order to incite public opinion in Germany against Russia and the Jews, as well as to prepare for the blackmailing of the democratic world with the threat of running the Jews through the whole gamut of persecution.

This technique for blackmailing the democratic countries by means of the threatened annihilation of the Jews and by the partial realization of this threat, functioned with precision, due to the fact that the Germans had the majority of European Jewry, namely the Polish Jews, under full control and at hand in the Ghettos. The Jews enslaved in Ghettos were in reality hostages of the Reich. The blood of these hostages greased the machinery of German diplomacy and propaganda. Anti-Jewish terror developed into one of the weapons of the Third Reich in this war. The Germans put the Jews on the first firing-lines and figuratively placed them before the muzzles of their cannons. With this living wall they tried to barricade the fortress of Europe. With the fate of Polish Jewry as his trump-card, Hitler carried out his political game, and when the time came, played his trump with the salvo of the firing squads.



SEPTEMBER 1940 BUILDING THE WARSAW GHETTO WALLS



DISCRIMINATION EMBLEMS FOR SALE

All Jews were compelled to wear arm bands with the Star of David.



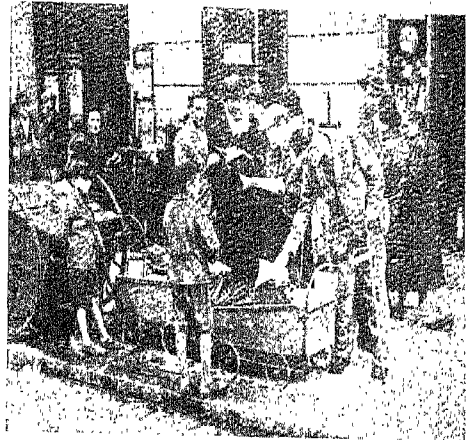
SELLING HOUSEHOLD POSSESSIONS ON THE GHETTO STREETS

The seller is obviously a former well-to-do person.





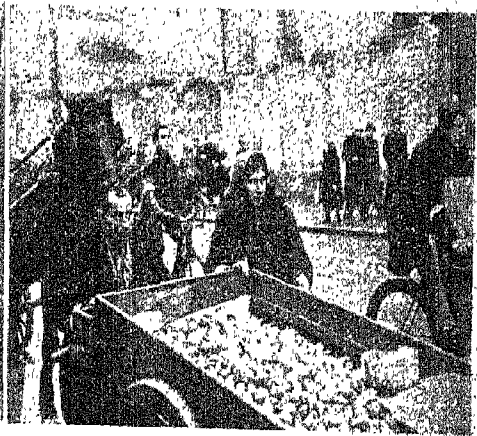
STREET SCENE IN THE WARSAW GHETTO



SIDEWALK BOOK STALL IN THE GHETTO



BREAD VENDOR IN THE WARSAW GHETTO
The loaves were kept in a case to prevent
snatching by the starving passersby.



JEWISH PUSHCART VENDOR IN WARSAW STREETS
Note bricked-up fronts of demolished buildings
in background.



COMMON GHETTO SCENE
Bartering clothes for food.



ELDERLY JEW HIS FACE SWOLLEN FROM

Thus Polish Jews died for the new, better world which had not let itself be blackmailed by the threat of annihilation of the enslaved Jews. So the Jews perished in a wave of terror which will be remembered as the most monstrous and cold-bloodedly planned extermination in the history of mankind.

MASS-SLAUGHTER STARTS WITH INVASION OF RUSSIA

As Polish underground circles had assumed, the visit of the Chief of the Gestapo, Heinrich Himmler, in March 1941 to the General Government had for its purpose the checking-up of the effectiveness of Nazi administrative measures against Jews and outlining the plan for the extermination of 50% of the Jews living in the Ghettos. This first phase of mass-slaughter started at once with the invasion of Russia.

Szmul Zygielbojm, representative of the Jewish Workers Party (Bund) in the Polish National Council in London, who in April 1943 committed suicide so that his death might serve to focus the attention of the United Nations on the tragedy of Polish Jewry, in a report published in the *Daily Telegraph* of June 25, 1942, stated:

"From the moment of the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, the Germans have set themselves to the physical extermination of the Jewish population in Poland. This began in the summer months of 1941, particularly in Eastern Galicia. The procedure everywhere has been as follows: all men between the ages of fourteen and sixty have been driven together in one place—a square or a cemetery—and there mowed down by machine-guns or blasted with hand-grenades, after having been made to dig their own graves. The children in orphanages, the pensioners in almshouses, the sick in hospitals were shot and women were killed in the streets. In many places the Jews were deported to an unknown destination and killed in neighboring woods. In Lwow 30,000 Jews were killed in that way, at Stanislawow 15,000, at Tarnopol 5,000, at Zloczow 2,000, at Brzezany 4,000. . . . The same things happened at Zborow, Kolomyja, Sambor, Stryj, Drohobycz, Zbaraz, Przemyslany, Kutu, Sniatyn, Zaleszczyki, Brody, Przemyśl, Rawa-Ruska, etc. These mass-executions have been repeated several times in those places and in many others. . . . In October and November the same thing began to take place in the Wilno district and around Kowno. In Wilno 50,000 Jews were murdered and at present only 12,000 Jews are left in Wilno. Practically all Jews in Zurawicze, Mir, Lachowice, Kosow, etc., were murdered. The murders in Slonim began on September 15th, when nearly 9,000 Jews were slaughtered. In Rowno the murders began in

the first days of November, when during three days and three nights nearly 15,000 Jews were shot, men, women and children. In Hancewicz, near Baranowicz, 6,000 Jews were shot. This mass-slaughter of Jews has taken place in all the Polish territories east of the rivers San and Bug."

THE PROPAGANDA OF BLACKMAIL

Simultaneously with the massacres committed by the Nazis in the eastern Polish territory which at the outbreak of the war had been occupied by the Russians, the blackmail of England and the United States, using the treatment of Jews as the weapon, was carried out with growing intensity. In November 1941 German propaganda especially emphasized the argument that the Jews sought to drive the United States into the war against Germany. Minister for Propaganda Joseph Goebbels in an article published in *Das Reich* of November 16, 1941, presented his readers with his portrayal of the Jewish warmonger who, under the name of "Baruch or Morgenthau or Untermeyer stands behind Mr. Roosevelt in order to incite him into the war." "The Jews," says the article, "are a parasitic race which has attached itself like a corroding mildew on the culture of healthy but undynamic nations. There is only one remedy—to cut them off and throw them out! How futile are the stupid, thoughtless, sentimental arguments of the few remaining friends of the Jews in view of this world-problem with which mankind has had to deal for thousands of years. They would probably stare open-mouthed if they should but once see how their beloved Jews wield the power. But then it would be too late. And therefore it is the duty of the national leadership to take care of it now with the appropriate means so that such a situation should not come about. . . . There is a difference between man and man, as there is between animals. The fact that the Jew still lives among us is no proof that he belongs to us, just as a flea cannot be considered a domestic animal, even though it lives in the house."

This statement, made in November, 1941, as well as the threats made by Hitler in his speeches, could not leave the slightest doubt of the Nazis' true intentions. Deeds accompanied words, or were not long in following them.

After the outbreak of the war between Germany and the United States in December, 1941, it is obvious that the Nazis found that their threats against the Jews should now be put into action—not partly but comprehensively, and based upon a special annihilation technique.

Whereas the massacres of Jews in the Eastern territory of Poland

were carried out in connection with the military operations against Russia, the terror in the central and western parts of Poland was performed with methodical thoroughness in an area already occupied and "pacified" two years before

METHODICAL ANNILATION IN CHELMNO GAS CHAMBER

Szmul Zygielbojm stated on the basis of underground reports from Poland: "In November and December 1941 began the slaughter of Jews in the western provinces of Poland illegally incorporated in the Reich, the so-called 'Warthegau'. The slaughter was done by means of gas. For this purpose a special gas-chamber car was used, into which ninety people were loaded at one time. The victims were buried in special graves in clearings of the Lubartow forest. On an average 1,000 were gassed daily. In Chelmno from November 1941 to March 1942 all the Jews from Kolo, Dab, Bugaj, Izbica, some 5,000 in all, together with 35,000 from the Lodz Ghetto and a number of gypsies were gassed."

One of the most terrifying accounts of this cold-blooded and calculated method of annihilation is the following eye-witness report published by the Polish Government-in-Exile:

"On January 15th, 1942, groups of Jews brought from the Lodz Ghetto began to pour into the town of Chelmno. The first group consisted of 750 families, about 3,000 persons. Many thousands came thus to Chelmno, Jews of both sexes and of all ages from infants to aged, both the hale and the infirm.

"No official reason was given for this deportation and concentration, but rumors were spread by the Germans to the effect that Chelmno was intended as nothing more than a camp from which the Jews would be taken to the County of Pinsk in Eastern Poland.

"Whatever the rumors may have said, there seems little doubt that the guards knew what it was all about. No one else knew what happened to the Jews who were sent to Chelmno. It was known only that they were driven into the local 'palace' and from there in parties to the nearby woods where they probably met their deaths. But today, despite all the careful preparation and organization by the Germans, despite the great efforts to preserve secrecy, the grim truth stands starkly revealed.

"As each party arrived, it was taken first to the Chelmno Church, where their parcels had to be left behind, and from there to the 'palace,' a shaky, one-story building

"A strong cordon of uniformed and plain-clothes Gestapo men was drawn around the neighborhood of the church and of Germans around the 'palace' so that no unauthorized person could get anywhere near. Not once did any two parties of victims come face to face.

"As the Jews arrived they were treated very courteously, especially at the hands of an elderly German of about 60 years of age in civilian clothes. They were ushered into a large barn which was heated and had the appearance of a bath. A flight of steps descended to a corridor which ended in a loading platform and from which doors led to small cell-like rooms.

"Here the old German who had received the Jews, an S.S. man, addressed them. He told them they would all be sent to the Lodz Ghetto, where the men would be employed in industry, commerce or crafts, the women would have the care of their home and the children would be sent to school. Before they left, however, they would have to take a bath and have their clothes disinfected.

"They were made to remove their clothes, the women down to their underwear and the men to their shirts and pants. Their personal papers and belongings were taken from them 'to prevent getting spoiled.'

"Then they were pushed down the steps towards the baths, as they thought, but in reality along the corridor to the loading platform. Then the mask was off and the farce of courtesy came to an end. With the aid of rifle-butt and truncheon, the Germans drove the terrified and despairing Jews, who prayed aloud as they realized their doom, into what were nothing less than murder-vans. These were two large grey motor-vans with airtight doors, metal-lined and floored with duck-boards under which were plainly visible the wire-gauze covered ends of tubes connected with an outside gas apparatus operated by the drivers.

"The tightly-packed vans were now driven some seven miles into the nearby woods and halted in a clearing surrounded with gendarmes armed with tommy-guns.

"At right-angles to the road a ditch had been dug, fifteen feet deep, fifteen feet wide at the top and five feet wide at the bottom. The spectators were some thirty German Gestapo men, S.S. men and civilians, and a number of Jews who were the grave-diggers.

"The vans stopped a hundred yards from the grave. The drivers, S.S. men in uniform, now turned on the gas and left the vans from which the sound of weeping and beating upon the walls could be distinctly heard.

"At the end of fifteen minutes when the sounds had all died away, the drivers approached the vans and shone their torches into the gas-

chambers. When they decided that all the victims were dead, they drove the vans near to the grave and waited a further five minutes, after which the S.S. officer in charge, a brutal sadist who bore the nickname of 'Whip' because he was never seen without one, gave the order to open the doors.

"Amid a strong smell of gas, eight of the grave-diggers began their work. Four of them threw the bodies from the car, two others dropped them in the grave and two more laid them in rows.

"Inside the vans the sight was horrible. Although the victims appeared almost to be asleep, they were fouled by their own excrement, either from fright or the effects of the gas.

"A disgusting ritual accompanied the interment. The civilian Germans examined all the corpses for valuables. Wedding rings were torn from fingers. Gold teeth were wrenched out and even the rectums and genital organs of the women were searched for concealed valuables.

"The thus shamefully despoiled and man-handled corpses were then arranged in the grave according to the orders of the S.S. man who pointed with a stick to the places where they were to be laid. They were arranged head to foot and the bodies of the children wedged into the gaps. One layer consisted of some 200 bodies which were covered with sand before the next layer was begun. Later the grave was strewn with chloride of lime.

"From six to nine van-loads of victims were buried daily. After each load the vans were scrubbed clean.

"To this mad orgy of slaughter the only witnesses besides the Germans were the grave-diggers. These wretches were housed in the cellars of the 'palace.' At 7 o'clock each morning they were given bitter, lukewarm ersatz coffee and a little dry bread taken from the food parcels of the victims. The triple lock on the door was then unfastened and the S.S. man ordered, 'Jews get out!' The S.S. men took care never to enter the rooms for fear the poor grave-diggers might be driven to some desperate act of assault. After being carefully counted and recounted, they were packed into a car and driven to their grisly task. They were made to work from 8:30 A.M. to about noon or 1:00 P.M., when they were again given cold ersatz coffee and dry bread.

"Those working inside the graves were not allowed to come out, but received their coffee, but no bread, where they were.

"At the end of the day they were ordered to lie face downward upon the corpses and were then shot through the head by the guards. The rest filled in the grave and were taken back to their cellar at about 5:00 P.M.

"Sometimes, as when the large consignment of Jews arrived from Lodz, they had to work late into the evening, aided by floodlights.

"From the moment they left their cellars to the time they returned to them the grave-diggers were constantly under the watchful eye of the S.S. men armed with tommy-guns. If they showed signs of exhaustion, they were either flogged or shot.

"Sometimes the grave-diggers had to bury the remains of their own friends and relations. One named Ajzensztab from Klodawa buried his wife and only daughter of fifteen; Chrzastkowski from Klodawa, his fourteen-year-old son. Podchlebnik buried his parents, his wife and two children and Rosenthal his 60-year-old father.

"The 'Whip,' often drunk, flogged the grave-diggers unmercifully. Almost every day S.S. officers arrived at the scene of murder and praised the 'Whip's' skill and organization.

"On one occasion, it happened that a tiny infant lying on a pillow had escaped the effects of gas. When they discovered it they killed it with a tommy-gun. Another day a German was locked in the gas chamber by mistake and although he shouted and beat upon the walls, the door was not opened again for him. He was simply buried in a separate grave. Perhaps it was a good way of getting rid of a witness.

"The grave-diggers say they will all be killed. In that noisome, dark and icy dungeon in which they are locked, they weep and despair, but there is nothing they can do. Their guards make them chant in chorus: 'We Jews thank Adolf Hitler for our food.' and other blasphemies.

"Countless attempts to escape were made and in the early stages of the massacres efforts were made to apprise the outside world of what was going on. At last three of the grave-diggers did contrive to escape and this is the story they have to relate. In their flight they were assisted by the Polish people, who were very kind and helpful."

START OF EXTERMINATION IN GENERAL GOVERNMENT

In February, 1942, the extermination of the Jews began in the General Government. Starting at Tarnow and Radom, the Jewish quarters were visited daily by the Gestapo and S.S. troops who killed the Jews systematically in the streets, courtyards and houses. In March a mass deportation of Jews from Lublin began. While this was going on, the children in the orphanages, the old people in almshouses, the sick in general hospitals as well as those suffering from contagious diseases, and many people in the streets and houses were murdered.

There were more than 2,000 victims. About 25,000 Jews were deported from Lublin in sealed railway cars to an unknown destination and all trace of them was lost. About 3,000 were put into barracks in the Majdan Tatarski near Lublin. In the last days of March, in Krakow, nearly 50 Jews were called out of their homes and shot at their doors. In Warsaw on April 17 the Gestapo staged a night of terror in the Ghetto, in the course of which 50 Jews, men and women, were dragged out of their houses and murdered.

After the scientifically elaborated system of annihilation had been tested the main blow was prepared with meticulous care. The target chosen for this blow was now the largest Ghetto in history, the largest concentration camp for the Jews, the Warsaw Ghetto, which, in the Spring of 1942, was packed to its utmost capacity with nearly 500,000 inhabitants.

Living conditions in the Warsaw Ghetto on the eve of the mass-extirmination, which started in July 1942, were dramatically described by an eye-witness, a secret courier of the Polish Underground organization, who reached London at the beginning of December 1942 after succeeding in getting out of Poland. His report was published in the *Voice of The Unconquered*, a monthly newsletter of the Jewish Labor Committee, New York, in March, 1943. Immediately upon arrival of the courier in London, the Polish Government summoned the two Jewish members of the Polish National Council, the late Szmul Zygielbojm and Dr. I. Schwarzbart, and turned over to them the documents which the courier had brought.

The courier stated that long before the orgy of mass-murder which commenced at the end of July 1942, conditions in the Warsaw Ghetto were desperate. We read in his report: "The hunger was so great that the people became crazed. The aged and children by the hundreds would drop dead in the streets. Dead corpses lying about in the streets no longer made any impression upon the inhabitants of the Ghetto. Every morning in front of practically every gate there would lie naked corpses. They were stripped of their clothes and cast into the street to avoid funeral expenses. All the dead gathered during the day would be buried in common graves."

DECLARATION OF POLISH GOVERNMENT

In a note presented to the Governments of the United Nations on December 10, 1942 by Count Edward Raczyński, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador to the Court of St. James, we read:

"Most recent reports present a horrifying picture of the position to which the Jews in Poland have been reduced. The new methods of mass slaughter applied during the last few months confirm the fact that the German authorities aim with systematic deliberation at the total extermination of the Jewish population of Poland and of the many thousands of Jews whom the German authorities have deported to Poland from Western and Central European countries and from the German Reich itself.

"The Polish Government considers it its duty to bring to the knowledge of the Governments of all civilized countries the following fully authenticated information received from Poland during recent weeks, which indicates all too plainly the new methods of extermination adopted by the German authorities.

"The initial steps leading to the present policy of extermination were taken already in October, 1940, when the German authorities established the Warsaw Ghetto. At the time when the Ghetto was established the whole population was officially stated to amount to 433,000, and in spite of the appalling death rate it was being maintained at this figure by the importations of Jews from Germany and from the occupied countries, as well as from other parts of Poland.

"The outbreak of war between Germany and Soviet Russia and the occupation of the Eastern areas of Poland by German troops considerably increased the numbers of Jews in Germany's power. At the same time the mass murders of Jews reached such dimensions that, at first, people refused to give credence to the reports reaching Warsaw from the eastern provinces. The reports, however, were confirmed again and again by reliable witnesses.

"It has been reliably reported that on the occasion of his visit to the General Government of Poland in March, 1942, Himmler issued an order for the extermination of 50% of the Jews in Poland by the end of that year. After Himmler's departure the Germans spread the rumor that the Warsaw Ghetto would be liquidated as of April 1942. This date was subsequently altered to June. Himmler's second visit to Warsaw in the middle of July, 1942, became the signal for the commencement of the process of liquidation, the horror of which surpasses anything known in the annals of history.

"The liquidation of the Ghetto was preceded on July 17th, 1942, by the registration of all foreign Jews confined there who were then removed to the Pawiak prison. As of July 20th, 1942, the guarding of the Ghetto was entrusted to special security battalions formed from the scum of several Eastern European countries, while large forces of

German police armed with machine guns and commanded by S.S. officers were posted at all the gates leading into the Ghetto. Mobile German police detachments patrolled all the boundaries of the Ghetto day and night.

"On July 21st, 1942, at 11 a.m., German police cars drove up to the building of the Jewish Council of the Ghetto, in Grzybowska Street. The S.S. officers ordered the chairman of the Jewish Council, Czerniakow, to summon the members of the Council, who were all arrested on arrival and removed in police cars to the Pawiak prison. After a few hours' detention the majority of them were allowed to return to the Ghetto. About the same time flying squads of German police entered the Ghetto, breaking into the houses in search of Jewish intellectuals. The better dressed Jews found were killed on the spot, without the police troubling even to identify them. Among those who were thus killed was a non-Jew, Professor Dr. Raszeja, who was visiting the Ghetto in the course of his medical duties and was in possession of an official pass. Hundreds of educated Jews were killed in this way.

"On the morning of the following day, July 22nd, 1942, the German police again visited the office of the Jewish Council and summoned all the members, who had been released from the Pawiak prison the previous day. On their assembly they were informed that an order had been issued for the removal of the entire Jewish population of the Warsaw Ghetto and printed instructions to that effect were issued in the form of posters. Additional instructions were issued verbally. The number of people to be removed was fixed at 6,000 daily. The persons concerned were to assemble in the hospital wards and grounds in Stawki Street, the patients of which were evacuated forthwith. The hospital was close to the railway siding. Persons subject to deportation were to be delivered by the Jewish police not later than 4 P.M. each day. Members of the Council and other hostages were to answer for the strict fulfillment of the order. In conformity with German orders, all inmates of Jewish prisons, old-age pensioners and inmates of other charitable institutions were to be included in the first contingent.

"On July 23rd, 1942, at 7 P.M. two German police officers again visited the offices of the Jewish Council and saw the chairman, Mr. Adam Czerniakow. After they left him he committed suicide. It is reported that Mr. Czerniakow did so because the Germans increased the contingent of the first day to 10,000 persons, to be followed by 7,000 persons on each subsequent day. Mr. Czerniakow was succeeded in his office by Mr. Lichtenbaum, and on the following day 10,000 persons were actually assembled for deportation, followed by 7,000 persons on

each subsequent day. The people affected were either rounded up haphazardly in the streets or were taken from their homes.

"The actual process of deportation was carried out with appalling brutality. At the appointed hour on each day the German police cordoned off a block of houses selected for clearance, entered the back yard and fired their guns at random as a signal for all to leave their homes and assemble in the yard. Anyone attempting to escape or to hide was killed on the spot. No attempt was made by the Germans to keep families together. Wives were torn from their husbands and children from their parents. Those who appeared frail or infirm were carried straight to the Jewish cemetery to be killed and buried there. On the average 50 to 100 people were disposed of in this way daily. After the contingent was assembled, the people were packed forcibly into cattle trucks to the number of 120 in each truck, which had room for 40. The trucks were then locked and sealed. The Jews were suffocating for lack of air. The floors of the trucks were covered with quicklime and chlorine. As far as is known, the trains were dispatched to three localities, Tremblinka, Belzec and Sobibor, to what the reports describe as 'Extermination camps.' The very method of transport was deliberately calculated to cause the largest possible number of casualties among the condemned Jews. It is reported that on arrival in camp the survivors were stripped naked and killed by various means, including poison gas and electrocution. The dead were interred in mass graves dug by machinery.

"According to all available information, of the 250,000 Jews deported from the Warsaw Ghetto up to September 1, 1942, only two small transports, numbering about 4,000 people, are known to have been sent eastwards in the direction of Brzesc and Malachowicze, allegedly to be employed on work behind the front lines. It was not possible to ascertain whether any of the other Jews deported from the Warsaw Ghetto still survive and it must be feared that they have been all put to death.

"The Jews deported from the Warsaw Ghetto so far included in the first instance all the aged and infirm; a number of the physically strong have escaped so far, because of their utility as labor power. All the children from Jewish schools, orphanages and children's homes were deported, including those from the orphanage in charge of the celebrated educator, Dr. Janusz Korczak, who refused to abandon his charges although he was given the alternative of remaining behind.

"According to the most recent reports, 120,000 ration cards were distributed in the Warsaw Ghetto for the month of September, 1942, while the report also mentions that 40,000 such cards were to be dis-

tributed for the month of October, 1942. The latter figure is corroborated by information emanating from the German Employment Office (*Arbeitsamt*), which mentioned the number of 40,000 skilled workers as those who were to be allowed to remain in a part of the Ghetto, confined to barracks and employed on German war production.

"The deportations from the Warsaw Ghetto were interrupted during five days, between August 20th-25th. The German machinery for the mass slaughter of the Jews was employed during the interval in the liquidation of other Ghettos in Central Poland, including the towns of Falenica, Rembertow, Nowy Dwor, Kaluszyn and Minsk Mazowiecki."

POLISH GOVERNMENT COURIER'S REPORT ON WARSAW EXTERMINATION

The report submitted by the previously mentioned secret courier of the Polish underground organizations states:

"A deep depression took hold of the Ghetto on Tuesday, July 21. On that day, some 60 hostages were brought to the Pawiak prison. They were, among others, the members of the Jewish Council I. Jaszunski, Sz. Winter, A. Gepner; also physicians, engineers and others. There was murder before the day was over. A number of persons were shot in the streets or in their homes. The streets were deserted, the trolley-cars empty, food disappeared from shop windows.

"Wednesday, July 22, marked the beginning of the real 'action.' Already in the morning it could be seen that the walls of the Ghetto were surrounded by German policemen and Ukrainian, Lithuanian and Latvian patrols. The masses did not realize the hopelessness and horror of their situation. The start of the 'action' was marked by the same mystery, uncertainty and ignorance of German plans as was the end of the 'deportation.' In this case, too, the Germans applied the element of surprise, characteristic of their entire war strategy. The Ghetto was hermetically closed, the enemy army entirely encircling it.

"The so-called 'expulsion action' is equivalent to the military action of mopping up a terrain, with one difference: in a military operation, the beaten enemy surrenders, and after being disarmed is placed in war prisoner camps, while the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto meant only a terrible death in Treblinka.

"In the morning hours of July 22, Hoffe, the Delegate for Resettlement Affairs, at a meeting of the Jewish Council, transmitted the following instructions:

1. All Jewish inhabitants of Warsaw, irrespective of sex or age, will be resettled in the East.

2. The following categories are exempt from resettlement:
 - a. all Jews employed by the German authorities or enterprises who are able to submit proof of it;
 - b. all Jews who are members or employees of the Jewish Council as of the day of publishing of this order;
 - c. all Jews employed by firms belonging to the German Reich, who are able to submit proof of it;
 - d. all Jews fit for work but not yet covered by the employment procedure; these are to be isolated in the Jewish quarter;
 - e. all Jews enrolled in the Jewish Guard;
 - f. all Jews belonging to the personnel of Jewish hospitals as well as those enrolled in Jewish Sanitary Columns;
 - g. all Jews, members of immediate families of persons enumerated under a. to f.; only wives and children are considered members of families;
 - h. all Jews who on the first day of resettlement find themselves in one of the Jewish hospitals and are not fit to be released; *the unfitness for release must be stated by a physician designated by the Jewish Council.*
3. Every Jewish deportee is permitted to take along 15 kilograms (33.3 lbs.) of his property as travelling luggage. Luggage above that weight will be confiscated. All precious objects such as money, jewels, gold, etc., may be taken along. Food for 3 days is to be taken.
4. Beginning of resettlement July 22, 1942, 11 P.M.

"The following instructions for the duration of resettlement are given to the Jewish Council; for their carrying out the members of the Jewish Council are responsible with their lives:

1. The Jewish Council receives orders concerning resettlement from the Delegate for Resettlement Affairs or his deputy only. For the duration of the resettlement, the Jewish Council may elect a special committee for resettlement matters, whose chairman is the President of the Jewish Council, and deputy chairman the Commandant of the Jewish Guard.
2. The Jewish Council is responsible for producing the Jews designated daily for resettlement. In order to accomplish that task, the Jewish Council is to use the Jewish Guard (1,000 people). The Jewish Council is to see to it that 6,000 Jews are delivered daily, not later than at 4 P.M., to the assembly place, beginning July 22, 1942. The assembly place for the duration of the

evacuation is the Jewish Hospital at Stawki Street. On July 22, 1942, 6,000 Jews are to be delivered directly to the loading station at the *Transferstelle*. For the time being the Jewish Council may draw the daily quota of Jews from the general population. Later on, the Jewish Council will receive definite instructions as to the parts of streets or housing blocks to be emptied.

3. On July 23, 1942, the Jewish Council is to evacuate the Jewish Hospital at Stawki Street and to transfer the patients and staff to another suitable building inside the Ghetto so that on the evening of July 23, 1942, the hospital may be ready to receive daily the Jews to be resettled.
4. Furthermore, the Jewish Council has to see to it that objects and property left by these Jews, unless infected, are taken and registered in special assembly points to be designated. For that purpose the Jewish Council should use the Jewish Guard and a proper number of Jewish laborers. This activity will be supervised by the *Sicherheitspolizei* which will issue special instructions to the Jewish Council. Illegal appropriation of these objects and property will be punished by death.
5. The Jewish Council also sees to it that Jews employed in German enterprises or by German authorities continue their work during the action. To carry out this order the Jewish Council will issue proper announcements to the Jewish population supported by heaviest penalties. The Jewish Council will also see to it that there is no pause in the functioning of such Jewish supply enterprises as will be required to secure the feeding of the Jews gathered at the assembly point as well as of the remaining Jews.
6. Moreover, the Jewish Council is responsible for burying, on the day of death, Jews deceased during the resettlement period.
7. The Jewish Council will post the following announcements to the Jewish population of Warsaw: "On the order of the German authorities all Jewish inhabitants of Warsaw will be resettled in the East . . . etc. (from point 1 to 4)."
8. Penalties:
 - a. Every Jew who does not belong nor has so far the right to belong to group 2. points a. and c., and who leaves the Jewish quarter after the start of resettlement, will be shot;
 - b. Every Jew who undertakes a move which may circumvent or disturb the carrying out of the resettlement orders will be shot;

- c. Every Jew who assists a move which may circumvent or disturb the carrying out of the resettlement orders will be shot;
- d. All Jews not belonging to categories enumerated under point 2, a. to h., who will be found in Warsaw after the conclusion of the resettlement, will be shot.

The Jewish Council is warned that should its instructions and orders not be carried out freely, a proper number of hostages will be taken and shot.

Warsaw, July 22, 1942.

Dictated by the Delegate for Deportation Matters.

Remarks supplementing the order,

On July 22, 1942, at a meeting which took place in the main building of the Jewish Council in Warsaw, the Delegate for Resettlement Affairs appointed Jakub Lejkin, who theretofore attended to matters pertaining to the direction of the Jewish Guard, to the post of Commandant of the Jewish Guard.

On July 22, 1942, at the meeting which took place in the main building of the Jewish Council in Warsaw, the Delegate for Resettlement Affairs issued an order to the effect that all institutions in the Jewish quarter such as the Board of Supplies, the Jewish Social Self-help, the Supply-Delivery Society, the Cooperative Bank, the Health Chamber, the Artisans' Association, the St. Heyman & Co. Waste Removal Enterprise, etc., are subordinated to the Chairman of the Jewish Council of Warsaw. The employees of these institutions are treated equally with the employees of the Jewish Council in Warsaw. The same goes for persons employed by the Administration of Real Estate in Warsaw, in the territory of the Jewish quarter of Warsaw.

"In the afternoon hours of July 22, crowds gathered before the posters announcing the deportation. The first day was marked by the delivery to the *Umschlagplatz* (transfer station) of the designated contingent of deportees. It consisted partly of inmates of the refugee asylums and of the inmates of the central detention station, 24 Gesia Street, who had been arrested mostly for failure to obey administrative orders.

"A frantic belief spread that the possession of a work certificate would enable the holder to avoid 'resettlement.' A veritable madness resulted. New enterprises were created, often by fakers in an attempt to squeeze the last penny out of the poor. People were prepared to do anything to place themselves and their families in shops; the only thought in their minds was the dream of 'Ausweis,' a work certificate,

and the Germans saw to it that this state of mental blackout persisted as long as possible so as to distract the attention of the masses from the progressing extermination. The *Umsiedlungsamt* issued definite instruction to the Ghetto militia to the effect that all certificates, including temporary 'Ausweise,' should be strictly honored. In the first period of 'deportation' these instructions were strictly carried out.

"The appearance of the Ghetto streets changed according to the intensiveness of the action. In the first period, while the action lasted, that is, from 8 A.M. to 6 P.M. the streets were deserted; but before 8 A.M. and after 6 P.M. the streets were crowded. The technique of hunting the victims varied. In the first period it consisted of blocking house-exits; later, whole streets were closed by formations of Ghetto militia.

"The house blockade began with the surrounding of an area by a Ghetto militia formation of 15 to 25 men under the command of a *Sicherheitspolizei* officer. All entrances and exits were closed, after which, all the tenants, irrespective of sex or age, were ordered to come out of their houses and present their documents. Groups of Ghetto policemen toured the apartments in order to make sure that all the inhabitants complied with the order. The commandant of the group—usually a *Sicherheitspolizei* officer—examined the 'Ausweise,' released the holders of valid ones and directed the rest to cars waiting at the entrance. These brought them to the *Umschlagplatz*.

"The street blockade consisted of surrounding the exits of the given section by squads of police and a severe examination of the documents of all who were caught. Those who did not hold a valid 'Ausweise' were loaded into cars and sent to the *Umschlagplatz*.

"During the 'resettlement' action the command of the *Sicherheitspolizei* mobilized almost all means of transportation for that purpose.

"Jews destined for 'deportation' were brought to the *Umschlagplatz*. The Jewish hospital at Stawki Street, whose patients and staff were for that purpose evacuated to 2 Leszno Street and which was in the immediate neighborhood of the *Umschlagplatz*, became an assembly point for 'deportees' prior to loading them into trains. There is a side railroad track at the *Umschlagplatz* from which freight trains loaded with Jewish victims were leaving.

"A transport of 5,000 to 6,000 'deportees' left daily. The loading of the cars took place in the afternoon hours, from 4 to 5 P.M. All those assembled were driven out of the hospital building to the accompaniment of brutal beating with guns and sticks. (This was performed by the Ukrainians.) The *Umschlagplatz* consists of two squares. On

the first square the so-called 'selection' took place. The stream of people—mothers with babies in their arms, people belonging to various social classes with heavy bundles on their backs—had to pass two or more S.S. men standing on both sides of the entrance. The Jewish men who were fit for physical labor were directed to the 'Dulag' (*Durchgangslager*—Transitory Camp) from which they were sent to various labor camps. The holders of valid *Ausweise* were usually released after the energetic intervention of the shop-managers; the rest, or at least 90% of them, were directed to the freight cars on the nearby tracks. In the first days of the action, the Germans selected the so-called physically unfit and killed them at the Jewish cemetery. This was done purposely to foster the conviction among Jews that those physically unfit were being killed as useless ballast while all the others would really be resettled.

"An average of 100 persons were loaded into a car. When filled, the cars were locked from the outside. The direction of the transport was invariably the same—the slaughter house of Treblinka.

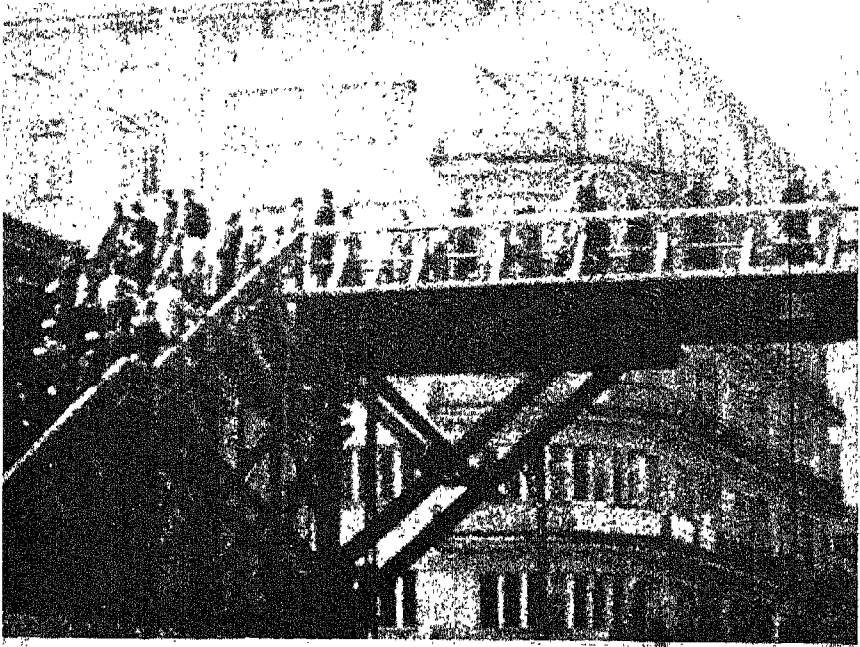
"The second period of the action began with a combined blockade of the houses at the Nalewki and Gesia Streets, directed by S.S. men, on Wednesday, July 29. This blockade was accompanied by shots which found their victims, as was characteristic of the rest of the action. On that day many shops and small factories were liquidated, and the workers together with the foremen were included in a group escorted by the Ghetto police. Certificates of the City Welfare Committee, some departments of the Jewish Council (the School department) and a number of factories were virtually invalidated on the principle that artisans' shops were superfluous and not needed by German production. Due to this there commenced a run on the 'essential' firms such as Tobbens Schultz, AHAGE, etc.

"A typical blockade of a house was quick and violent. The Germans and *Junaks* (Ukrainians and Lithuanians), armed with guns, machine-guns and revolvers, ran up all the staircases yelling, '*Alle Juden raus, alle Juden hinunter*' (All Jews out, all Jews downstairs), and ordering everybody to descend to the court. Those who were sick or hiding were killed instantly and mercilessly. Downstairs everybody, without exception, was included in the ever-growing group waiting in the street. When 2,000 to 3,000 victims were collected they were taken, under strong escort, to the *Umschlagplatz*; sometimes the group was first driven to the hospital building, very often directly into the cars. There was no more question of releasing anybody on the basis of working cards, not even of entire groups of shop or factory workers. Documents issued by the headquarters of the General Government were torn up as invalid.



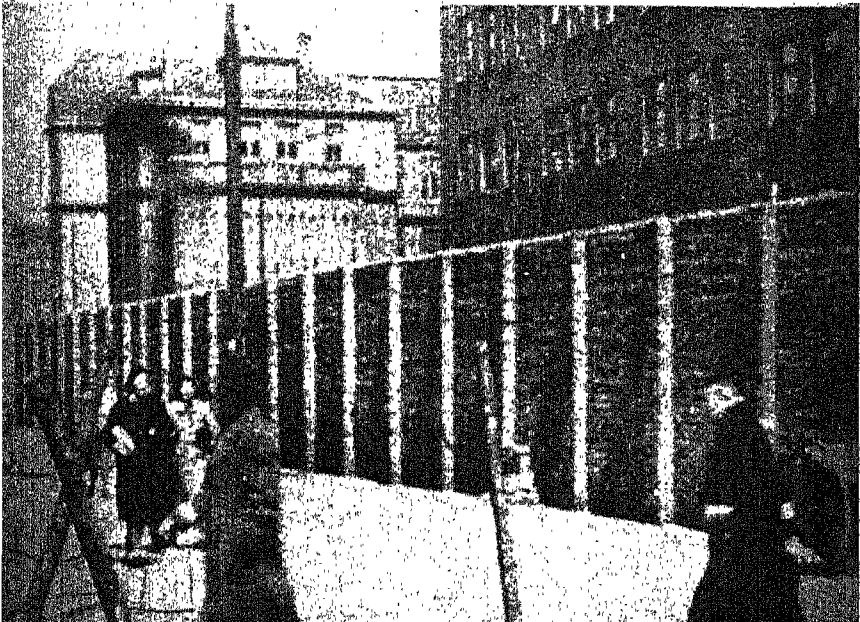
JEWES IN THE GHETTO WEARING ARM-BANDS

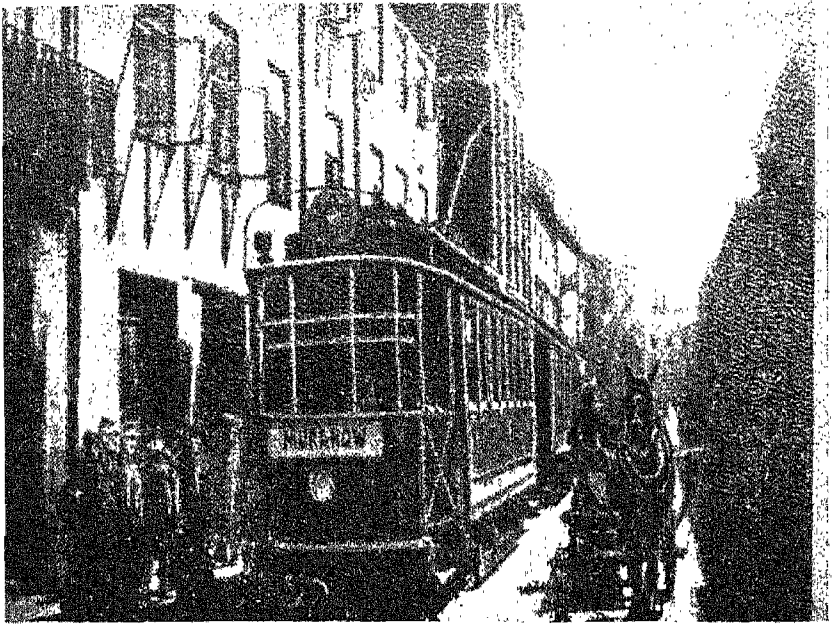




GHETTO ARCHITECTURE

An overpass bridge connects two parts of the Ghetto divided by a street in the "Aryan" section of Warsaw.





EVEN THE STREET CARS IN THE WARSAW GHETTO WEAR
THE JEWISH STAR OF DAVID

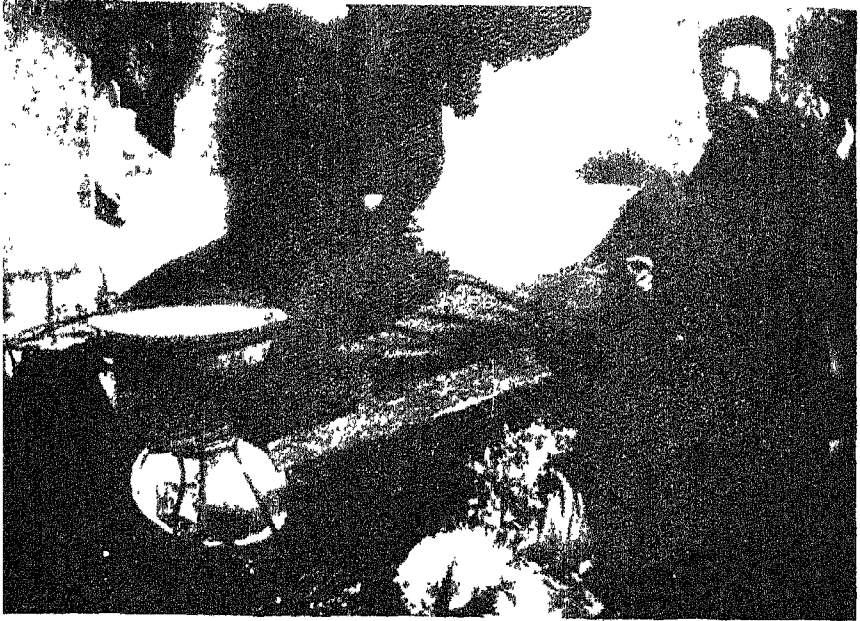
The German caption, in the Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung, says with cheap irony, that even the street-cars in the Ghetto have adjusted themselves to the environment and just as the Jews carry the Star of David on their arms, so the street-cars carry them on their forehead.

1941.



1941.





INTERIOR OF GHETTO DWELLING



WOMEN SELL THEIR HOUSEHOLD BELONGINGS IN FRONT OF THEIR MISERABLE DWELLINGS

Only people actually employed and found in the German shops were spared. This resulted in the annihilation of entire families, with one or two persons remaining out of scores. Sometimes entire families went to the *Umschlagplatz*.

"Daily, numberless groups of deportees could be seen in the morning and toward the evening in their tragic march to the *Umschlagplatz*, under escort, without any bundles, even without the most indispensable clothing. The escorting soldiers and S.S. men often shot at men trying to escape or simply to terrify the people. The sight of these terrorized, beaten and tortured people, some with madness in their eyes, some numb and resigned, and above all the sight of children taken out of asylums, kindergartens and orphan homes accompanied by their supervisors and educators, clamors for vengeance

"The streets became even more deserted

"In the period from August 10th to 16th, four consecutive announcements had been posted concerning the change of the Ghetto boundaries. The Jews fell into the trap of changing their abodes in the Ghetto, and in this way the Germans succeeded in achieving their aims: (a) to distract the attention of the Ghetto inhabitants from the raging 'deportation'; (b) to limit to the minimum the time allowed for moving within the Ghetto and thus to compel the Jews to leave their entire property behind in their abandoned apartments. Many who tried to save their property found themselves at the *Umschlagplatz*; many others gave up their property and stayed in the factories together with their families.

"Simultaneously, workers of the 'essential' firms move into the emptied blocks. The streets of the ever-shrinking Ghetto are fenced off with barbed wire. There is constant fluctuation; moving into a new house does not protect one from a blockade. No one is sure of the roof over his head.

"Mass slaughters and robbery took place upon the occasion of clearing blocks of people not entitled to live there. Thus, the action of clearing Nowolipki Street between Smocza and Karmelicka, which took place on August 1, resulted in 2,000 'deportees' and scores of dead.

"Gradually, the remaining Jews began to realize that the Germans sent all the 'deportees' to Treblinka where they died under atrocious tortures, especially since news from Treblinka began to come in, whispered secretly at first, and more openly later. Scores of persons who succeeded in escaping from the vast slaughter-house recounted their tragic experience. In the atmosphere of constant uncertainty, moving from one place to another, physical and moral terror, the Germans no longer cared about keeping the secret from the Warsaw Jews. In the

second phase of deportation, with the Jewish masses completely broken and unable to put up resistance (except for some isolated cases of active or passive resistance), the Germans were only interested in keeping the secret from the rest of the world, and in that they succeeded.

"The *Umschlagplatz* becomes a synonym for death. There are no more volunteers for 'deportation.' The population hides wherever it can, in cellars, abandoned houses, ruins.

"In the second half of August, the factory certificates were declared invalid and were replaced by registration cards stamped by the *Sicherheitsdienst*. At first the Germans honored these new labor cards and thus made the population believe that the new document was a protection against 'deportation.' People hunted for registration cards with the stamp of the *Sicherheitsdienst* and those marked '*Unterliegt nicht der Umsiedlung*' (not subject to deportation). They gave away their last possessions to secure these new 'infallible' documents for themselves and their families. Again the Germans succeeded in winning credence for the theory that there were better and worse groups of workers. This lie about the value of stamped registration-cards was growing and being inflated until it burst, resulting in bringing to the *Umschlagplatz* new masses of people who had trusted the word of German officers.

"The second period of 'deportation' can be divided into three phases: the first phase marked by blockades of houses and streets along with the liquidation of some enterprises (Waldemar Schmidt, Carl Heinz Mueller, Astrawerke, T. Tepicyn & M. von Szaniawska) whose workers were sent to the *Umschlagplatz*. The second phase in August was devoted to resettlement inside the Ghetto. The biggest of these was the liquidation of the small Ghetto. Within 24 hours, all Jews except the workers of the firm of W. C. Toebbens and Wilhelm Doerings who lived south of Chlodna Street, had to leave their homes. With one stroke of the pen the Germans thus got the entire property of tens of thousands of Jews, worth tens of millions of zlotys. A special institution, the S.S. *Wertefassung* (Board of Property Seizure), which has been working without interruption until this very day (middle of November 1942) took over the abandoned Jewish property. In addition to this, houses were blockaded and their inhabitants sent to Treblinka. The third phase was marked by the blockading of workshops in addition to all the above.

"The blockade of the heretofore recognized German factories in the Ghetto shattered the last Jewish hopes. Now complete liquidation of the Jews was expected.

"In the meantime, the Labor Office issued a confidential circular

listing specified numbers of Jewish laborers granted to German shops and working centers in the Aryan quarter of Warsaw. The circular concerned some 30,000 persons, since, according to the announcement of August 16, the family members of working persons were also declared as unemployed; consequently, in the interpretation of the circular, only those actually employed had the right to live.

"The Germans used to raid workshops, drive all the employees and workers away from their machines into the court, and line them up in triple rows. Then, to the accompaniment of wild shouts, shots and inhuman beatings, the selection of those lucky ones took place who were considered fit for work. There were many who already had been brought to the *Umschlagplatz* following street or house blockades, two, three or five times and who escaped at the risk of their lives. There were among them people who escaped by jumping out of cars already in motion. During the blockade of the workshops they once more faced death. It is significant that the Germans did not consider the needs of the factories; very often they took away vital workers, the best experts who could not be replaced. The interventions of the German managers were successful in very few cases. As a rule, the workers went directly to the trains leading to death in Treblinka."

REPORT OF DR. I. SCHWARZBART

Dr. Ignacy Schwarzbart, member of the Polish National Council, stated in London on November 15, 1942:

"The methods applied in this mass extermination are, apart from executions, firing squads, electrocution and lethal gas-chambers. An electrocution station is installed at Belzec camp. Transports of settlers arrive at a siding, on the spot where the execution is to take place. The camp is policed by Ukrainians. The victims are ordered to strip naked ostensibly to have a bath and are then led to a barracks with a metal plate for floor. The door is then locked, electric current passes through the victims and their death is almost instantaneous. The bodies are loaded on the wagons and taken to a mass grave some distance from the camp. A large digging machine has been installed recently at Treblinka. It works ceaselessly, digging ditches, mass graves for Jews who are to meet their death there. The Ukrainian guards, witnesses of the mass murders, are allowed to keep the money stolen from the victims. These bestial murders sometimes take place in the presence of the local non-Jewish Polish population, who are helpless and overcome with horror with the sight of such inhuman violence."

SLAUGHTER OF CHILDREN AT MEDEM SANATORIUM

250 Jewish children, patients at the Medem Sanatorium for Jewish workers' children in Miedzeszyn, near Warsaw, were murdered by the Nazis. A report from the Jewish Underground movement in Poland relates the details of this horrible crime:

"The Medem Sanatorium, which was founded and maintained by the Jewish Workers' Organization of Poland, was one of the finest and most modern institutions of its kind in Poland. After the outbreak of the war and the occupation of Poland by the Nazis, it was able to carry on its work thanks to the efforts and sacrifices of its staff, giving permanent shelter to 250 children. The current wave of massacres that the Nazis have launched against the Jews does not spare young or old. The children of the Medem Sanatorium have shared the tragic fate of the rest of the Jewish children in Poland. The Nazis surrounded the sanatorium and ordered the personnel to leave the premises. The majority of the staff, foreseeing what was in store for the unfortunate children, refused to leave them in order to save their own lives. They were shot together with the children."

THE NAZIS EXPLAIN

The Nazi newspaper *Krakauer Zeitung*, a copy of which reached Geneva in January 1943 from Poland, carries an article advocating "the rooting out of the Jews as a last measure of safety for the local population." The paper also reports that the question of Jewish deportation was discussed recently at a conference of members of the Institute for German Labor in the East, held in Warsaw. A 'lecture' was delivered at the conference on 'the History of Jewish Settlements in Central and Eastern Europe' and anti-Jewish addresses were delivered emphasizing the necessity of 'eliminating the Jews from the European continent.' "

POLAND'S WOMEN PROTEST

The following manifesto issued by the women of Poland to the Polish Prime Minister General Sikorski reached him through underground channels and was made public in January, 1943:

"Mr. Prime Minister and General: The women of Poland address to you their greetings for the Army fighting abroad. They transmit the might of their suffering, their yearning for liberty and their determination to persevere, which is stronger than death. We are fighting together with you each day, by day and night, breathlessly, without respite. We

desire you to know and remember these things. Upon your return we wish you to find houses and not ruins, living men and not decomposed corpses. We therefore cry out while yet there is time.

"Our only weapon in the struggle against the enemy is silence. We are silent when at night they tear away our sons and daughters, when they drown a Jewish child in the sewers and smash with a knuckle-duster the skull of a mother bringing food to her family, when they shoot at our husbands and hang them in railway stations, when they round us up with their rifle-butts and force us to watch them die. But our silence of two years ago differs greatly from our silence of today.

"During the last weeks we are witnessing mass executions. People are being murdered by entire families or groups—men, women and children. Hundreds of towns and villages are thus depopulated. This is labelled the 'liquidation' of the Jewish element. Each day thousands of Jews are taken from Warsaw and thousands from other cities and poisoned by gas or lime vapors in closed railway trucks. Others are machine-gunned and buried half alive, corpses are converted into chemicals in underground factories. Each day, whole families commit suicide. Mothers with small children leap out of windows to the pavement. Children lose their minds in the streets.

"In the streets of the Ghetto, the soldiery shoot them like game. In Lublin children were thrown out of windows. In small towns whole groups of Jews are driven to death on foot or in cars by whips of the Gestapo. In Przeworsk the Jews awaiting capture thronged around the Cross before the Cathedral invoking Christ for help. All of them perished. The number set for the extermination of Jews has by now been almost reached. The raving monster is seeking new victims. The hunt has already started in the central part of southern Poland.

"Why this silence? Are there no Polish, British and American bombs? We have no tears left, but we are alive. We are capable of dying for Poland, but we want to live for her sake. We demand the ruin of a German city for every bloody massacre, air-raids on German civilian population and tenfold executions for every murdered victim in Poland.

"Do not forget, General, this appeal of ours."

PROTEST OF POLISH CATHOLICS

All the Polish groups working underground condemned the monstrous crimes of the Nazis in their illegally printed literature. Among leaflets now in the possession of the Polish Government is one published

by the Catholic group known as the Front for the Restoration of Poland; a translation of the text follows:

"In the Warsaw Ghetto, behind the wall which cuts it off from the world, several hundred thousand condemned are awaiting death. For them there is no hope of rescue, no help is coming to them from anywhere. The executioners speed through the streets, shooting anyone who dares to leave his house. They also shoot anyone who appears at the window. Unburied bodies lie about the roads.

"The prescribed daily number of victims is eight to ten thousand. The Jewish police are obliged to hand them over to the German executioners. If they fail to do so they themselves perish. Children who are not strong enough to walk are loaded onto carts. The loading is done so brutally that few reach the siding alive. Mothers go mad as they watch the sight. The number who have gone mad from despair and terror equals the number who have been shot.

"Railway trucks wait at the siding. The executioners thrust up to 150 condemned persons into each. A thick layer of lime and chlorine, over which water has been poured, is spread over the floors. The truck doors are sealed. Sometimes the train sets off immediately it is loaded, sometimes it stands in a siding for a couple of days. That is of no matter to anyone now. Of the people packed in so tightly that the dead cannot fall and continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the living, of the people slowly dying in the fumes of lime and chlorine, deprived of air, a drop of water, food, none will be left alive. Wherever, whenever the death trains reach their destination, they will contain only corpses. . . .

"In face of this torture only a speedy death would be emancipation. The executioners have foreseen this. All chemists shops in the Ghetto have been closed so that they shall not supply poison.

"What is happening in the Warsaw Ghetto has been happening for six months past in a hundred smaller and larger Polish towns. The total number of Jews killed already exceeds a million, and the figure is rising every day. Everybody is perishing. Rich and poor, old people and women, men, youngsters, infants . . . all guilty of having been born in the Jewish nation are condemned by Hitler to extermination.

"We do not wish to be like Pilate. We cannot actively oppose the German murders; we can do nothing, we can save nobody. But from the bottom of our hearts, filled with compassion, loathing and horror, we protest. That protest is demanded of us by God, by God who forbade killing. It is demanded by the Christian conscience, Every creature calling himself a man has the right to the love of his neighbor. The

blood of the helpless calls to heaven for vengeance. Anyone who does not support this protest is no Catholic.

"At the same time we protest as Poles. We do not believe that the German atrocities will turn to Poland's benefit. By no means. . . .

"He who does not understand this, he who would dare to connect the proud and free future with a base rejoicing in the misfortunes of his fellows, is neither a Catholic nor a Pole"

THE HUNT IN THE GHETTO

A description of the way in which the Jews were hunted down in the course of the liquidation of the Ghetto was given by the courier who reached London in December 1942, and who has been previously quoted:

"There were thousands of children, whose parents are either murdered or dead of hunger, roaming the streets of the Ghetto. The Germans organized actual hunting parties of these children and shot them in the thousands. In general the Germans demonstrate a particular brutality towards Jewish children. One can cite thousands of cases of people, who upon returning home from a day of forced labor, no longer found their children alive. Like beasts, the Germans comb the Ghetto during the day, drag children out of their homes or off the streets and shoot them before the Ghetto gates or outside of it. The Nazi authorities distributed arms to the Hitler youth of 15 and 16, who go in hordes through the streets of the Ghetto and kill all whom they meet in their path. They do not choose; children or grown-ups. And when the streets are finally deserted they go into the yards and homes or shoot through the windows. German soldiers and agents of the Gestapo are running the Hitler Youth a close second in this orgy of murder. They come to the Ghetto in an interminable stream. For amusement they run competitions to determine who is the better shot. Some degenerates even mark the corpses with chalk, so as to be able to check the number they have killed. One Gestapo man by the name of Krause is known to enter a home, lock the door and murder an entire family. Then he marks in chalk on the door the number of persons he had shot that day. In the month of October alone, this Krause had marked in chalk on the door of a home the figure 1006—a thousand and six persons he had personally shot!

"I want to return to the question of 'deportations,'" the report continues. "I saw in Warsaw the first part of this act and later on the outskirts of Belzec the second and last part. . . . From Warsaw the Jews

are driven to the tracks on the outskirts of the city where a long train of cattle cars is already waiting for them. Before they reach the tracks, however, many are shot for one reason or another, particularly those who lag behind. The whole route is literally strewn with corpses. When they finally reach their destination they are robbed of all their possessions (officially the deportees are urged to take along their most valuable possessions). Then they are loaded in cars, a hundred people in a car, and the first lap of the journey which lasts from two to eight days begins. Not once during the journey are the doors of the cars opened with the result that many die before they reach the 'sorting point' (Oboz Rozdzielczy) which is located about fifty kilometers from the city of Belzec. Nevertheless the first stage of this journey is mild, almost human, in comparison with what awaits them at the second stage.

"In the uniform of a Polish policeman I visited the sorting camp near Belzec. It is a huge barracks only about half of which is covered with a roof. When I was there about 5,000 men and women were brought to the camp. However, every few hours new transports of Jews, men and women, young and old, would arrive for the last journey towards death.

"It is humanly impossible to convey the impression that these 5,000 people made upon me: they are no longer in the image of men. Skeletons with eyes dead with resignation. Naked, frightened, they are in constant motion, with convulsive, nervous movements. A child is lying with its face towards the roof. It is in the last agony of death. But no one pays any attention to it. I spot amidst this indistinguishable mass an old man completely nude. He was probably stripped of his rags. No one looks at him. He makes no impression upon the people that surround him. The guards keep on shooting at the throng. Corpses are scattered everywhere. Men, in their convulsive moving about, step over them. They hardly notice the dead. Every few minutes the guards pick a number of men to clear the dead which are piled up alongside the fence.

"This, too, is done without any emotion, without a single expression in their faces as though they are completely oblivious of what they are doing. These are no longer normal beings but one large convulsive mass breathing its last.

"The people are kept in this camp for several days. By the time they start on the last leg of their death-journey most of them have had nothing to eat for days since they are not given any food and have to subsist on whatever they manage to bring along with them.

"The second and the most gruesome stage of their journey com-

mences. Accompanied by the lashing of whips and the shooting of guns the 'deportees' are suddenly, without any warning, driven to the railroad tracks which are several dozen meters from the camp. A wild stampede of human beings begins. In the meantime, the Germans have made all the preparations to intensify their torture.

"The route from the camp to the tracks is a specially constructed narrow passage lined by a weak fence of boards. On both sides of the fence are stationed armed guards. From behind the people are driven by guards who lash out mercilessly with their whips. Everything is designated to create a panic and a stampede. But at the same time 'order' is demanded and no one dare touch the fence. Anyone who as much as touches the fence is shot at by the guards who are lined alongside of it. The shooting, the blood, and the groans and shrieks of those who have been hit only increases the stampede and this gives the guards additional reason for shooting. In this manner, hundreds are killed on a stretch of several meters. But these are the lucky ones. An even more horrible death awaits the survivors.

"The narrow passage leads to an open door of a cattle car. These are the famous cars designed for '40 people or 8 horses.' We have measured these cars and found that if human beings were to be loaded there tightly pressed together and completely nude they could hold only 90. Yet 140 people are loaded in these cars. On both sides of the entrance are stationed special S.S. men with guns and whips. It is their job to force the people into the cars.

"In panic and fear the emaciated skeletons perform acrobatic feats. A moment comes when the last inch of a car is loaded to capacity. But human being are still being driven into it: '*Einsteigen, einsteigen!*' People begin to climb over the heads of their neighbors holding on by their hands and feet to the hair of those who are already inside. Thus fifty more manage to get into the car which is then locked. Soon another takes its place. . . .

"A long train thus packed with several thousand men, women, and children is switched to a side line where it remains from two to eight days. The doors are never opened. Those inside suffer inhuman agony. They have to perform their natural functions over the heads of the others. Many cars are painted with lime which begins to burn from the dampness of the urine and increases the tortures of the barefooted and nude.

"Because there are not enough cars to kill the Jews in this relatively inexpensive manner many of them are taken to nearby Belzec where they are murdered by poison gases or by the application of electric cur-

rents. The corpses are burned near Belzec. Thus within an area of fifty kilometers huge stakes are burning Jewish corpses day and night."

NEW JEWISH AREAS ESTABLISHED

The bloody purge of the Ghettos and the deportations connected with the massacres were accomplished before complete resettlement of the banished Jews was ordered through special decrees. Before the decrees were issued, the expelled Jews were herded into some "distribution points," such as Belzec, Tremblinka and Majdan Tatarski. Only in October and November of 1942 were the towns listed in which Jews or persons legally designated as Jews, were permitted to dwell.

Of nearly seven hundred Jewish communities in Poland, many of which have a history going back a thousand years, only a few dozen have remained. All the rest have been completely cleared of Jews.

Two orders were issued by Secretary of State for Security in the Government-General of Poland, Krueger, who is head of the police, the Gestapo and the S.S. Elite Guards. The first order applied to towns in the Warsaw and Lublin districts; the second to the districts of Krakow, Radom and East Galicia. All other localities were to be cleared of Jews by December 1, 1942. The orders were issued in the *Verordnungsblatt Fuer Das General-Gouvernement* (Official Gazette) and bear the numbers 94 p. 665 and 98 p. 683 respectively.

Among towns made *Judenrein* were such large and well-known communities as Czestochowa, Kielce, Nowy Sacz, Kolomyja and Lublin. A short time ago Radom and Lublin had huge Ghettos, including many thousands deported from other parts of Poland and from Germany.

In Central Poland there was only one Ghetto left and there were twelve in Galicia. In addition, there were forty-two townships in which Jews were permitted to live, twenty-one of them being in Eastern Galicia. Until the Nazi occupation there were at least seven hundred localities in Poland which had Jewish communities.

Until recently, Jews were permitted to live in the Warsaw, Lublin, Radom, Krakow districts and in East Galician district. Later Jews in the Warsaw district were permitted to reside only in the Warsaw Ghetto and in the following five townships of the district: Kaluszyn, Kosow, Rembertow, Siedlce and Sobolew. These were designated as "Jewish townships" and the Jewish population there was not allowed to maintain any contact with the non-Jews.

In the Lublin district, there were no more Ghettos, but Jews were still scattered in the following "Jewish townships": Izbica, Konska

Wola, Lukow, Miedzyzecz, Parczew, Piaski, Wlodawa and Zaklilow. The same situation prevails in the Radom district. All Ghettos were abolished after the deportations had emptied them of most of the Jews. Those Jews who still remain are held in four "Jewish townships": Sandomierz, Szydlowice, Radomsko and Ujazd. In the Krakow district Jews were isolated in the Krakow Ghetto and in the four "Jewish townships": Przemysl, Rzeszow, Tarnow and Bochnia.

The largest number of Jewish Ghettos is in Eastern Galicia. In addition to the Krakow Ghetto there are also eleven Ghettos in the East-Galician cities of Lwow, Tarnopol, Stanislawow, Zloczow, Rawa-Ruska, Brzezany, Czortkow, Stryj, Drohobycz, Sambor and Boryslaw. The "Jewish townships" in Eastern Galicia are the following: Bobrka, Grodek, Rudki, Jaworow, Jaryczow-Nowy, Lubaczow, Busk, Sokal, Bukaczowce, Pahajce, Rohatyn, Skalat, Trembowla, Zbaraz, Kopyczynce, Przemyslany, Brody, Zborow, Buczacz, Borszczow and Tluste.

The exodus of all Jews from other places in occupied Poland to the restricted areas was to be completed by December 1, 1942, according to the Nazi decrees. Any Jew found outside of the restricted "Jewish townships" and Ghettos would be shot without trial, the orders warned. Non-Jews found guilty of feeding, housing, or aiding the Jews, or encouraging them to remain in the towns from which they were ordered to move, would similarly be shot. For not reporting the presence of Jews outside of the restricted "Jewish" areas, non-Jews would be sent to concentration camps.

The Nazi decrees also provided severe punishment for non-Jews found in the 42 townships and 13 Ghettos which were to be inhabited by Jews only. Exceptions were to be made for those receiving special permission from the authorities. Similarly, Jews can leave the Ghettos and the "Jewish townships" only when they receive special permission, granted only to workers employed in war industries outside the restricted areas, such workers to be escorted by Nazi guards to their place of work where they are to be segregated from the non-Jewish laborers during working hours and returned to their Ghettos at the end of the day under Nazi escort.

Jewish Councils responsible to the Nazi authorities for the conduct of the Jews have been established under the new decrees in all 42 "Jewish townships" and in the 13 Ghettos in the larger cities. These Councils are also responsible for the food distribution in their localities. The complete segregation of all Jews in Poland in places isolated from the non-Jewish population may have been motivated by the Nazi desire

to prevent non-Jews from witnessing the Nazi extermination of the Jewish population.

THE JEW AS SCAPEGOAT

The broad outlines of the political theory behind this human butchery had already been prepared by the Nazis as material for world-wide broadcast. While the slaughter was going on Hitler declared in a speech made on January 3, 1943, that "international Jewry" was the chief instigator of the war. He said: "This can best be proved by the fact that what may appear to be the most extreme differences have been united in the fight against European national States." Once again he tried to expose the links between Jewry and the Soviet Union. "This alliance," he said, "between the arch-capitalistic States of the West or even of America with its mendacious, sham socialist regime of bolshevism can only be understood because the leadership in both cases lies in the hands of International Jewry even if the personalities visible to the outside world appear to contradict each other."

In this speech the tendency to put full responsibility of the war on the shoulders of Jews, as well as holding them responsible for the setbacks suffered by the Nazis in the Russian campaign, was clearly expressed: "Roosevelt's Jewish brain-trust, the Jewish press of America, the Jewish broadcasting system of these countries, the Jewish party organization and so on, they are nothing else but an equally Jewish framework of the leadership of the Soviet Union."

Based on such arguments his threat did not leave any doubt as to his true intentions toward the Jews. He declared emphatically: "And furthermore I gave assurance that the hope of international Jewry to destroy the German and other European nations by means of a new World War will be the gravest error committed by Jewry for thousands of years, and that it will in any case not destroy the German nation but will exterminate itself."

TREBLINKA

Official Report Submitted to the Polish Government

THE village of Treblinka is situated near the Warsaw-Bialystok rail-road line, a few kilometers from Malkinia, in a sandy and wooded area. The population consists of Polish peasant-farmers and forest workers. In 1940, the Germans established a penitentiary concentration camp, Treblinka A, on the sandy stretches near the village, for Poles who were guilty of transgressions against the occupant, of not supplying the demanded amounts of agricultural produce, or who were caught smuggling. The discipline at the camp is very strict; prisoners are shot on any pretext. The camp is as notorious as the penitentiary camp at Oswiecim.

In March, 1942, the Germans began the construction of another camp, Treblinka B, in the vicinity. That camp has become the slaughter-house for the Jews of Poland and of other European countries. Poles from the nearby Treblinka A, as well as Jews caught in the neighboring villages, were put to work at the preparatory construction. That work lasted until the end of April when the central building of the camp, death-house No. 1, was built.

Treblinka B is situated on sandy hills among woodland. The area of the camp is comparatively small, some 5,000 hectares (about 12,500 acres). It is entirely surrounded by a green fence interwoven with barbed wire entanglements. Part of the fence runs through a young forest in the north. At the four corners of the camp, observation points were placed for the *Lagerschutz* (Camp Guard). The *Lagerschutz* consists mostly of Ukrainians armed with machine-guns. At the observation points strong searchlights have been placed to light the entire place at night. Observation posts are also set in the middle of the camp and on the hills in the woodlands. The western border of Treblinka B is formed by the rail embankment along which runs a side-track that connects the camp with the main railroad-line. The side-line was constructed in recent months, in order that the trains of transports might be delivered directly to the slaughter-house. The northern border of

the camp is formed by the forest; east and south the border cuts through sandy hills. In the area of the camp, bushes form a long stretch parallel to the railroad tracks starting in the north.

A railroad-crossing is adjacent to the side-track; trains with transports halt there. From that barrier there is an entrance to a square which holds two to three thousand persons. The square is fenced in with barbed-wire. On the square, not far from the northern border, there is a wooden barracks. In the south-western corner of the square there is a guard-house with a military post on 24-hour duty. South of the square, outside of the fence, there is a cloth-sorting place (*Lumpensortierungsplatz*), and further south, there is the execution place of the camp-commandant and the graves of the victims murdered by him. The arrival-square is connected with the rest of the area by an entrance in the north-eastern corner of the fence. From there, a path runs through the woods for about 200 meters eastwards and then turns at right angles to the south and runs along the forest, parallel to the western limit of the arrival-square. This road stops at a large building of an unusual shape: it is an unfinished one-story brick-construction, about 40 meters long and 15 meters wide. (When we received the information concerning Treblinka B in the first half of September, this building was about to be finished.) The Germans began the construction of that building after the action started, probably in the middle of August, with the help of Jewish artisans picked out from among the Jews brought to Treblinka for slaughter. It is significant that the bricks for the construction had been brought from as far as Warsaw, in trucks attached to each transport. The bricks were loaded in the Warsaw *Umschlagplatz* by Jewish workers. According to the report of an eyewitness, the interior of the building is as follows: a corridor 3 meters wide runs through the middle; there are five chambers on each side; the height of each chamber is about 2 meters; the area about 35 square meters. The execution chambers are without windows, but they have doors opening on the corridor and a type of valve on the outside walls. Next to these valves there are large scoops (they remind one of large vessels). In the walls pipes were installed from which water-steam is supposed to pour into the chambers. This was to have been death-house No. 2.

A path skirts the building and runs along its western wall finally ending at the next building near death-house No. 1. This building is at right angles to the death-house No. 2. It is a brick construction much smaller than the other. It consists of only three chambers and a steam-room. Along the northern wall of this house runs a corridor from which there are doors to the chambers. The outside walls of the chambers

have valves (until recently doors which had been changed into valves for utility reasons). Also here a scoop in the shape of a shallow vessel is placed at the height of the valves. The steam-room is adjacent to the building. Inside the steam-room there is a large vat which produces the steam. The hot steam comes into the chambers through pipes installed there, each having the prescribed number of vents. While this machinery of death is in action, the doors and valves are hermetically closed. The floor in the chambers has a terra-cotta inlay which becomes very slippery when water is poured over it. There is a well next to the steam-room, the only well in the whole area of Treblinka B. Not far from the death-house, south of the barbed-wire and wooden fences, there is a grave-diggers' camp. The grave-diggers live in barracks next to which are the kitchen buildings. On both sides of the camp there are two guard-houses. The remaining area of Treblinka B is destined for the murdered victims. A part of that area is already a large cemetery. At first, Poles employed in the camps dug the graves; later, as the slaughter was intensified and the need for more ditches grew, special digging-machines (bulldozers) were brought, which run day and night at grave-digging. A Diesel-motor supplies the energy and its rattle is a characteristic sound at Treblinka B.

The supervisors and execution-staff are small in numbers. The slaughter-house is commanded by an S.S. man of the rank of major; his name is Sauer. The German staff, consisting of S.S.-men, are in terror of their chief. The moment they see him from the distance they drive the Jewish workers as well as the victims on their way to death with even greater energy. Altogether, there are ten Germans and thirty Ukrainians.

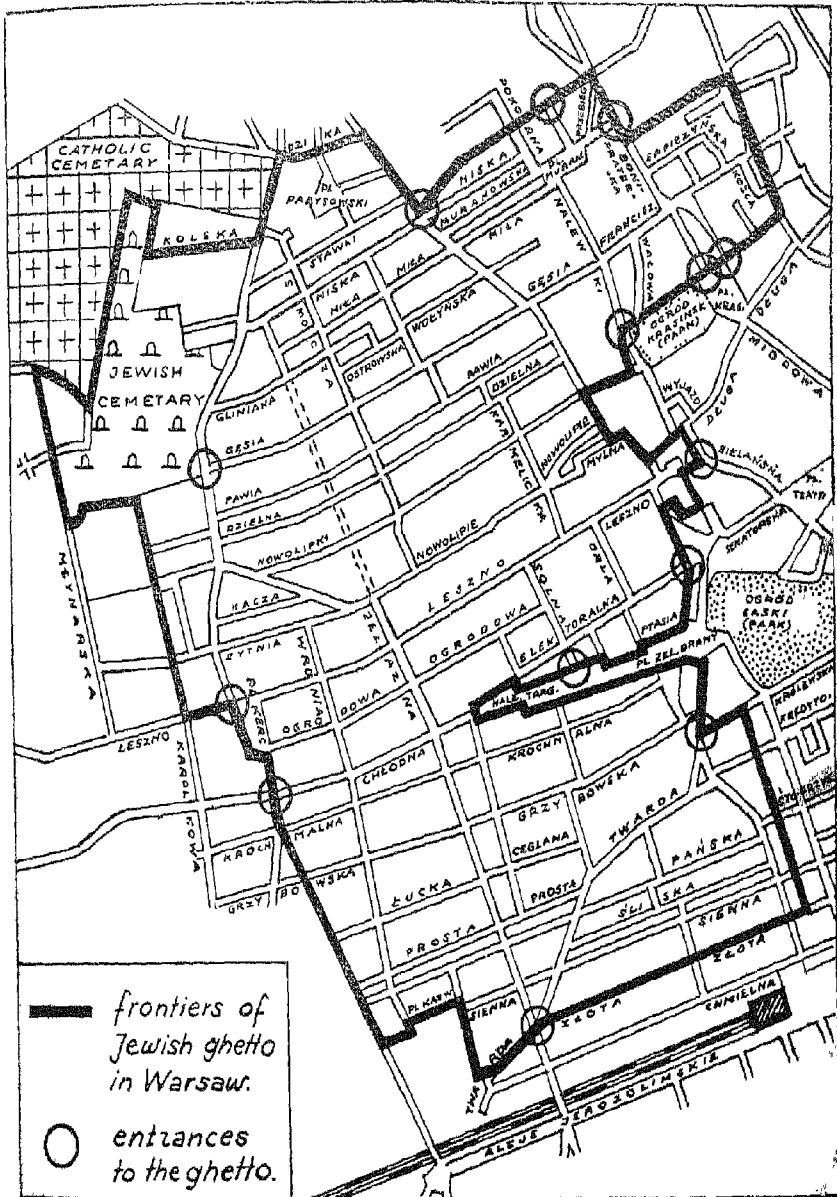
The German crew changes from time to time; sometimes S.S.-men from various towns of the General Government who were active at the deportations there, arrive in the camp.

In addition to the German-Ukrainian *Lagerschutz*, there is also the Jewish auxiliary, part of whom are busy at the sorting place for the clothing of the victims (*Lumpensortierungsplatz*), and part of whom act as grave-diggers. They empty the execution chambers and bury the dead; the rest work at the arrival-square. The groups of the Jewish auxiliary service are headed by group-leaders whom the Germans call "*kaapos*." They are relatively better fed than the rest and wear a triangular yellow patch at their knees to distinguish them from the others. The personnel of the Jewish auxiliary service undergoes almost daily changes. Rarely can a Jew stand that service for more than two weeks, due to the inhuman treatment they receive at the hands of the Germans.

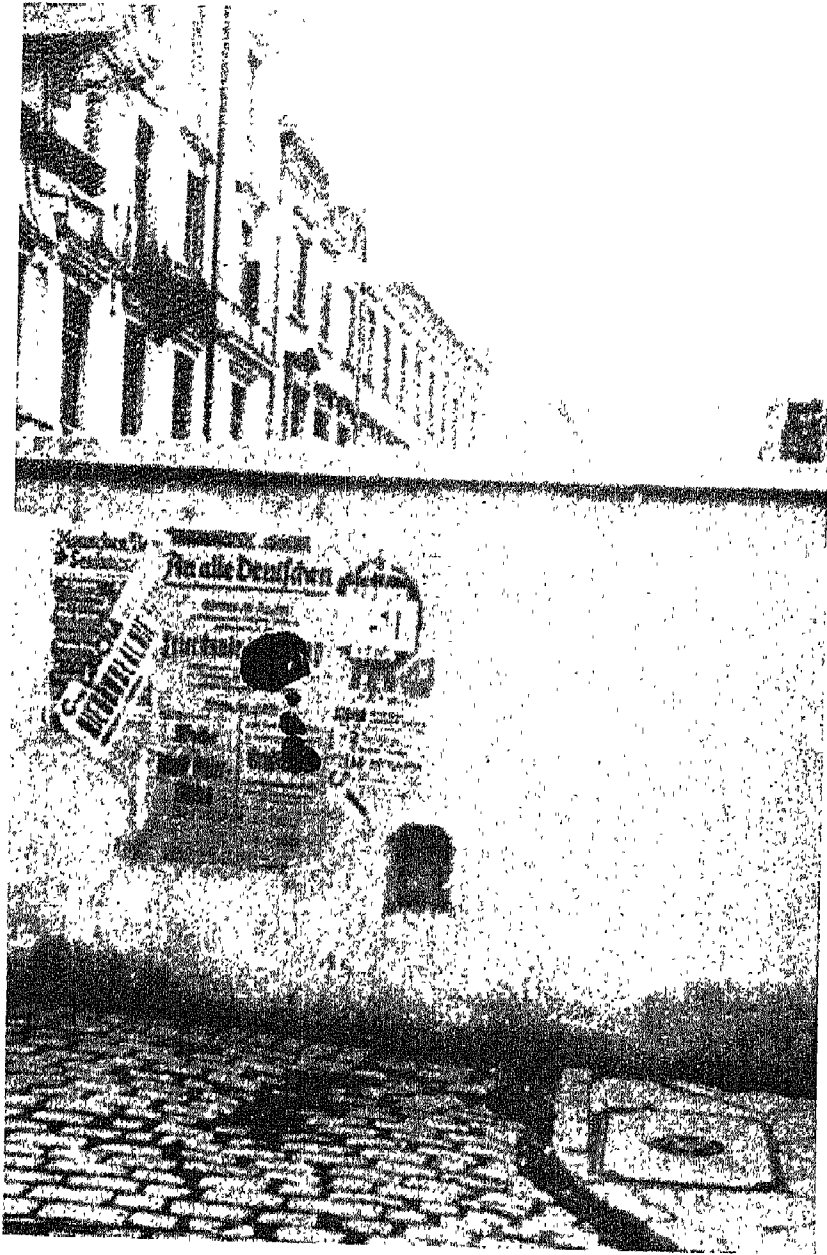
They are constantly tortured and whipped; corporal punishment (25 strokes) is very frequent as well as the shooting of the weak ones who lose their fitness to work. This is done mostly by the chief himself. Every day there is a roll-call. The German asks who does not feel strong enough to carry on with the work? A few men step out of the row, report their unfitness and beg him—as though for a favor—to be shot. The executions take place at a special spot; the victim himself stands erect over a grave while the chief shoots at the back of the victim's head. The next victim has to step nearer and throw the body of the murdered one into the ditch, and then a few moments later, share the fate of his predecessor. These young Jews are so overworked that all will to resist is gone; on the other hand, the German terror is so atrocious that it makes them even want to die so as not to suffer further inhuman tortures. In one of the first days of September, the chief of Treblinka thus murdered 500 young Jews by shooting them one after another with his gun; what is startling is that not one of this group of a few hundred men attempted to resist death. The execution lasted from 7:30 to 3 P.M.

The relatively lightest work in the death camp is the sorting of the clothing of victims. While assigned to that work, one can eat to one's heart's content, for the "deported" Jews took along large food-stocks. bread, marmalade, fat, sugar. But the chief does not leave the men at this work for any length of time; after a few days, he transfers them to grave-digging.

The gaps in the Jewish auxiliary service are supplemented from among the transports arriving in Treblinka. As a rule, two transports arrive daily: one in the morning and one toward evening. In the period of greatest intensity of the action a few transports arrive daily. Each train consists of a few score of freight cars. Some of the cars halt at the side-track straight across from the arrival-square, while the remaining cars are shifted to the side to wait until the first part is taken care of. The cars are quickly emptied. The tortured and excited throng breathes with relief when let out on the square. They are immediately taken over by the Jewish auxiliary guard headed by the "*kapos*." These give orders in Yiddish. The women and children are ordered to enter the barracks immediately while the men remain in the square. Looking around, they see a high pillar with a poster bearing a large inscription: *Achtung Warschauer* (Attention, natives of Warsaw) despite the fact that transports of Jews from many other towns of the General Government, from Germany and the states of Western Europe are also brought to Treblinka. "Do not worry about your fate," continues the poster. "You

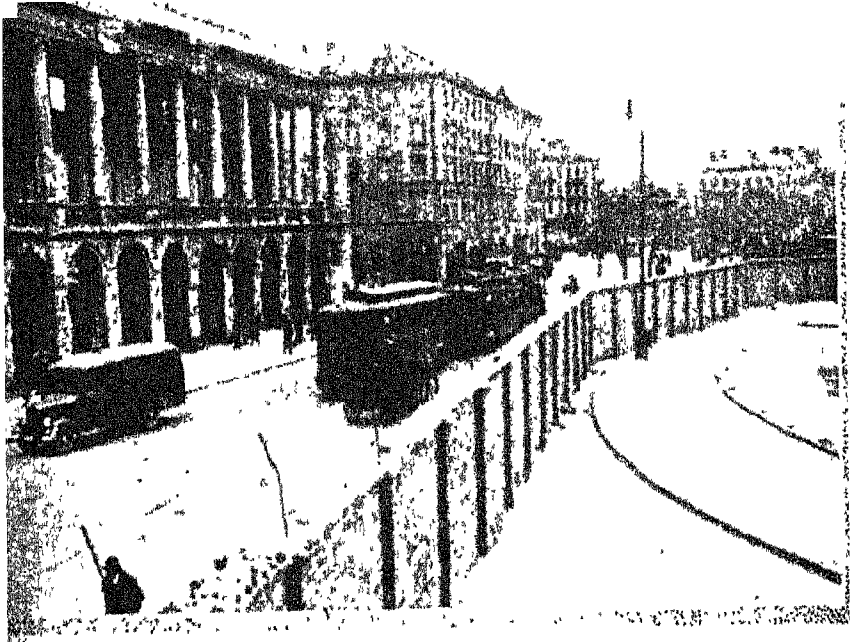


MAP OF THE WARSAW GHETTO AS ESTABLISHED OCTOBER 15, 1940



OUTSIDE VIEW OF THE WALL OF THE WARSAW GHETTO
One of the German posters is the notice of a Nazi Party festival.

So lebt und haust das Volk, aus dem die Mörder von Bromberg, von Lemberg, Dubno, Bialystok hervorgingen. Ein Bericht aus dem Warschauer Ghetto



Line Welt für sich.

hohe Mauer scheidet das Judenviertel von den anderen Stadtgebieten. Hier hat das Ghetto, der größte jüdische Wohnbezirk Europas, durch die deutsche Verwaltung errichtet und unter Aufsicht der Regierung des Generalgouvernements einem jüdischen Ältestenrat verwaltet. Straßenbahnen und eine Vielzahl von Dreirad-Taxis halten den Verkehr aufrecht.

PART OF THE WARSAW GHETTO WALL

The scurrilous German caption says: "So live the people from whom are descended the murderers . . ."

are all going eastward for work; you will work and your wives will take care of your households. Before leaving, however, you have to take a bath and your clothing must be disinfected. You have to deposit your valuables and money with the cashier (of Treblinka) for which you will get receipts. After the bath and disinfection, you will receive everything back unharmed."

In the first period of murder in Treblinka an S.S. officer with a kind, confidence-inspiring face used to come to the square and hold a speech along the same lines. However, when in the course of the action ever larger transports arrived from various parts and the crowds had to be quickly liquidated, the Germans cancelled the speech as superfluous.

To make the Jews believe that actual classification according to trades would take place at the arrival-square in order to send occupational groups for labor, they placed small signs with the inscriptions: Tailors, Shoemakers, Carpenters, etc. It goes without saying that such segregation never took place.

The "*kapor*" quickly put the men in rows of ten, ordering them to take off their shoes, undress completely and prepare for a bath. Everybody is permitted to take along a piece of soap and his documents. In the meantime the sorting-service men take away the clothing to the sorting-place. Women and children also have to undress completely. Now comes the last act of the Treblinka tragedy. The terrorized mass of men, women and children starts on its last road to death. At the head a group of women and children is driven, beaten by the accompanying Germans, whips in their hands. The group is driven ever quicker; ever heavier blows fall upon the heads of the women who are mad with fear and suffering. The cries and laments of the women together with the shouts and curses of the Germans interrupt the silence of the forest. The people finally realize that they are going to their death. At the entrance of death-house No. 1 the chief himself stands, a whip in his hand; beating them in cold blood, he drives the women into the chambers. The floors of the chambers are slippery. The victims slip and fall, and they cannot get up for new numbers of forcibly driven victims fall upon them. The chief throws small children into the chambers over the heads of the women. When the execution chambers are filled the doors are hermetically closed and the slow suffocation of living people begins, brought about by the steam issuing from the numerous vents in the pipes. At the beginning, stifled cries penetrate to the outside; gradually they quiet down and 15 minutes later the execution is complete.

Now comes the turn of the grave-diggers. Shouting and cursing, the

German overseers drive the diggers to their work, which consists of getting the bodies out of the execution chambers. The grave-diggers stand at the scoop, near the valves. The valves open but not a body falls out. Due to the steam all the bodies have become a homogeneous mass stuck together with the perspiration of the victims. In their death agonies, arms, legs, trunks are intertwined into a gigantic macabre entanglement. To make it possible for the grave-diggers to get out single bodies, cold water from the near-by well is poured over the mass. Then the bodies separate and may be taken out. As a rule the surfaces of the bodies are not defaced; only the faces and buttocks are purple. The grave-diggers, constantly beaten and driven by the Germans, place the corpses on the scoops until the chambers are empty. The bodies lie piled up like slaughtered cattle. Now the burying takes place. Formerly (during the first half of August), the Jewish grave-diggers had handcarts to convey the bodies to the ditches, which had to be done at top speed. Lately, however, the chief did away with them. "*Ein Mann—zwei Leichen*" (one man—two corpses), meaning that each grave-digger has to bury two corpses. He ties the legs or the arms of the body with his belt and running, pulls it from the scoop to the ditches, throws it in and, again running, returns for the next load. Formerly the graves were right at the death-house so that the burying of corpses could take place quickly. As new victims were added, the grave-line moved ever further to the east and the pulling of the corpses to the graves takes longer and longer. After the ditch is filled, the grave-diggers quickly cover the bodies with earth and the digging-machine nearby prepares the next grave.

The execution of the men is identical. They also are driven through the road in the woods to their death. The victims react differently while being driven in the direction of the death-house; some repeat loudly psalms of penitence, confess their sins; others curse God; but a sudden shout of the Germans and the blows falling upon the backs of the doomed men immediately brings silence on the whole crowd. Sometimes all the victims cannot get into the overcrowded chambers; then the Germans keep the rest in the woods near the slaughter-house. These people see and hear everything but there is no attempt at self-preservation.

This is irrefutable proof of the atrocious terror wielded over their victims by the Germans.

The new death-house provides for the liquidation of 8,000 to 10,000 victims. If we consider that right now 2,000,000 murdered Jews, or the greater part of Polish Jewry, are already buried in the area of

Treblinka, the disturbing question arises: for whom do the S.S.-men intend that new house of death; who are to utter their last breaths in that slaughter-house? Most probably the death-machine, once started, will not limit itself to murdering Jews. At present, the specter of death in steam chambers rises before the Polish population; there have already been some signs of it: according to a report of an eyewitness, the Germans exterminated a group of Poles in death-house No. 1, in the second half of August.

CHAPTER TEN

THE BATTLE OF THE WARSAW GHETTO

Report submitted by Dr. Ignacy Schwarzbart, member of the Polish National Council, to the Representation of Polish Jewry

AFTER the massacres and deportations from the Warsaw Ghetto in the Fall of 1942, some 40,000 Jews remained, mostly men and women of middle age who were physically fit to perform labor. Most of them were concentrated in the new, small Ghetto; some of them lived in the adjoining streets of the former Ghetto. Soon after, new walls were built at the boundaries of the small Ghetto and the Germans began to transfer all the Jews there amid scenes of violence and murder. In December a new wave of massacres and deportations began. Rumors circulated in Warsaw that January 1943 was to be the deadline. On January 18, the Germans started the Ghetto's final liquidation. In the early morning, strong formations of SS Schutzpolizei and Latvians entered the Ghetto. But there was a surprise in store for them. Some of the Jews, in their desperation, barricaded themselves in blocks of houses and started bitter resistance. It became apparent that they possessed considerable stores of arms and ammunition. In the first few days, the Germans lost a score of dead a few score wounded. The battle was still raging on Saturday, January 23, when tanks drove into the Ghetto. A number of houses were burned down; the Germans killed all the Jews in the houses they captured. Over a thousand perished in this way. The majority submitted passively to the German terror; large transports of Jews departed daily for Treblinka. After a few days the battle ceased.

FINALE

In March 1942, the officials in charge of workshops within the Ghetto informed the Jews that the shops were being moved outside of Warsaw and that the Jews must offer to move voluntarily to the new location. The Jews were assured that they had nothing to fear, that their work was recognized as useful, that their families would not be

separated and that living conditions would be favorable. At the same time they were warned that efforts to escape or resist would lead to fatal consequences. One German official pointed out that Jews who had escaped to the "Aryan" part of Poland frequently came and offered to work for him because their nerves could not stand the strain of illegal existence.

A small number of old men, women and children, weary of the hunger and unbearable living conditions in the Ghetto requested to be sent to Trawniki. Most of the young men and women resisted these offers, because they knew that every step out of the Ghetto would be a step closer to death. They preferred passive or, when possible, active resistance as long as they did not leave the Ghetto which they regarded as their citadel.

The Germans recognized the danger of having thousands of determined young men and women in an enclosed part of Warsaw. When they realized that their efforts to clear the Ghetto with the consent of the Jews had failed to get any results, they decided to liquidate it by force.

The liquidation began suddenly at dawn on April 19, 1943, shortly before Passover. The formal reason advanced was that only 200 Jews had answered a call for workers to be sent to Trawniki after the Germans had set a definite quota. The large Ghetto bounded by Leszno, Nowolipi, Bonifraterska, the forts of the Citadel and Smocza Streets, was surrounded by SS men, German police, and Latvians, Ukrainians and Lithuanians. In the morning, units of the German police heavily armed with machine guns, grenades, and armored trucks, entered through the Zamenhof Street entrance gate of the Ghetto. The manner of the German attack showed that they expected to meet with armed resistance. The struggle began and the Germans suffered relatively large losses. There was talk of several killed, a large number of wounded and the loss of ammunition and military equipment. A number of ambulances were seen speeding through the streets of Warsaw carrying dead and wounded Germans.

The first German attack was repulsed within a few hours. The Germans retreated to the borders of the Ghetto and brought reinforcements of tanks and artillery, which began to break through the first defense line. Heavy artillery attacked the corner of Bonifraterska and Nowolipie Streets and Franciszkanska. The defenders fought back with machine-gun fire, causing further losses to the Germans. In the first attacks, the defense had great success. The tanks were recalled; two are said to have been burned. The inner part of the Ghetto was cleared of the enemy, and the Germans were forced to use more powerful means, artillery

directed by airplane observation, setting fire to houses; later the Germans changed their tactics, attacking only at night and using the daytime for observation. They started a merciless barrage at night, burning block after block of houses in the outer streets of the Ghetto. The Germans were counting on a gradual reduction of the area of the struggle and on starving out the Jews. Particularly heavy firing occurred during the nights of April 23, 24 and 25. Beginning with April 25, the resistance weakened and the defense was sporadic. Tremendous fires swept through the Ghetto and the German groups entered. The defenders had to retreat to the northern part of the city. Groups of Jews, presumably those who had not participated in the struggle, were seized by the Germans and transported in the direction of the station.

The German attack was very cowardly. After their first discouraging experience on the night of April 23, the Germans restricted their use of arms to long range artillery, otherwise confining themselves to burning street after street and making the escape of the defenders from this flaming inferno impossible. The soldiers on guard shot every person within range. There were cases of the wounding or murder of Poles too. The Germans destroyed the openings of sewers on Plac Krasinski, Leszno and Bonifraterska Street, through which the Jews attempted to escape. They also patrolled the neighboring streets in the "Aryan" quarter in order to catch the escaping Jews who were then murdered on the spot. About 3,000 Jews were killed in this manner from April 19 until May 5. At the same time, the Germans posted placards announcing that the Ghetto was being liquidated, and those who sheltered Jews would be heavily penalized. A few days later, that is in May, an announcement of the German police commander declared that because the Jews and Communists had resisted, the Ghetto was to be liquidated. The announcement also called on the population to give up any Jews who were in hiding.

The struggle in the Ghetto stopped suddenly. Jewish resistance was broken chiefly by the heavy fires which the Germans started. These fires destroyed hundreds of houses. The following streets were completely destroyed: Nalewki, Nowolipie, Nowolopki, Franciszkanska, Karmelicka, Miła, Niska, Plac Muranowski, Smocza, Gesia and others. Not one house on all these streets was saved, and the ruins of the houses were later dynamited by the Germans. The material loss due to the fires was greater than that which occurred during the bombing of 1939; more than 100,000 rooms were destroyed. The fires lasted ten to fifteen days after the actual "conquest" of the Ghetto and included areas which were not objectives of the struggle. Among other edifices, the Germans dyna-

mitted the Great Synagogue on Tlomackie Street which was situated half a kilometer outside the Ghetto. The smoke of the fires pervaded all of Warsaw and the flames could be seen for several kilometers. No fire fighters were admitted to the Ghetto.

In the small Ghetto, Zelazna, Ceglana, Prosta, the Germans followed different tactics. They contented themselves with seizing Jews from the workshops (the shop of Tobbens on Leszno Street, Schultz and others). Through the early days of May the Germans succeeded in killing and deporting 12,000 Jews. The liquidation of the small Ghetto occurred, without struggle, on May 15-18. The Germans deported and killed all the Jews and burned a number of houses.

Today the Warsaw Ghetto is no more. There are only the ruins of hundreds of burned and ruined houses. The Jewish section as well as its approaches is empty. The number of Jewish victims has not been counted and will probably never be counted because the bodies of fighters were burned along with the houses. It is estimated that 6,000 Jews died within the iron ring of fire and shell. The rest were left to the Germans, and were tortured to death in execution camps. Only those who escaped from the Ghetto and hid in the "Aryan" part of Warsaw are left in the city.

A Jewish fighting organization led the defense in the Ghetto. Their forces were small, they did not have much ammunition. Nevertheless they fought for four weeks in this tragic struggle.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

DOCUMENTS AND EYEWITNESS REPORTS

IN THE second half of November 1942 a number of refugees from Poland arrived in Palestine. They brought with them eyewitness accounts of the situation in Poland.

X. appeared at the office of the Representation of Polish Jewry in Tel Aviv on November 27th and stated as follows:

"In January, 1942, a new persecution of Jews was started, assuming its most horrible form, namely deportation. It began in the so-called 'Warthegau,' a part of Poland annexed to the Third Reich. Up to that time Jewish artisans and skilled workers used to work in so-called 'sheds.' That was the situation at Czortkow and Zdunska Wola. In those sheds Jewish tailors were employed at sewing new uniforms and mending old uniforms for the German army. They received food. In that part of the country living was much cheaper than in the others. Jews lived in the Jewish quarters.

"On January 8, 1942, deportations from Klodawa, Belchatow and Pabianice were started. Those artisans who worked in workshops were sent to Germany. Women and children were sent separately and nobody knew where. These deportations were carried out systematically and according to plan. Sometimes the date of the forthcoming deportation was known two days in advance. Those who tried to escape and were caught were shot on the spot. The manner in which the deportations were carried out was so terrible and the details which came in so appalling that at first no one would believe they could be true. From Belchatow, however, a woman with two children escaped and she brought the details. Then they were confirmed by other sources, too. The method of deportation was as follows. The deported Jews were brought to a small locality called Chelmno near Klodawa, in the vicinity of Kalisz, and ordered to enter a large building. The building was well heated and the people were ordered to undress, allegedly for a bath. They were let into the building in groups of 40. There was another entrance to the building and before that door a lorry was standing. The inner walls of the lorry were covered with metal plates. The Jews were packed in

groups into the lorry, then it was closed hermetically and driven off to a nearby wood, where graves had already been prepared, 8 m. long, 8 m. wide and 4 meters deep. The lorry was brought to the edge of the ditch and then swung open. Bodies already dead fell down into the graves. They were arranged in layers and covered with lime and sand. The pits had been dug by Jews who were subsequently murdered. Those who refused to dig were killed immediately. It is possible that the people in the lorries were killed by gas because no traces of blood were found on their route from the village to the wood.

"Presently news of the deportations from other Jewish country towns began to come in. The news particularly mentioned the towns of Lowicz, Wloclawek and Plock. 700 Jews from Drobin, Dobrzyn and Sierpce arrived in Piotrkow. They were accommodated in schools and synagogues. 800 other Jews expelled from various small towns arrived in Piotrkow and so the number of Jewish inhabitants of that town rose to 25,000. Before the war its Jewish population numbered 17,000.

"The deportations were carried out with the utmost secrecy. No one knows the details, not even the *Volksdeutsche* were allowed to assist at the procedure. Not even German military officers knew the details. Everything was performed by the Gestapo. I know that there are even Germans who do not believe that deportation means murdering. Deportations were carried out by Special Commissions (*Sonderkommissionen*). The Jews call them '*Vernichtungskommandos*' (Annihilation Squads). *Obersturmfuehrer* Feu is the head.

"In the General Government the deportations were initiated in April 1942. First came the town of Lublin. Information of what was happening in Lublin was given to me by a Jew who had escaped from there. The number of Jews concentrated at Lublin was 70,000. They all lived in the Ghetto. Of all those, 7,000 were sent to a locality called Majdan Tatarski and put into two camps.

"In one camp, the 'penal' camp, the people were terribly abused and beaten. The second was a 'labor camp' where the prisoners worked and were given bread and some soup. To those camps were sent physically fit Jews, artisans and several physicians. The remainder of the Lublin Jews were carried away to an unknown destination. There were rumors that they were sent to Ukraine, for work in Kijow; later on it was said that they were in the neighborhood of Sevastopol.

"I wish to point out that formerly Jews from abroad arrived in Poland. They were brought in groups from Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Holland, Germany and France. They were put into separate quarters. At first they were treated a little better than the Polish Jews but later on,

after the deportations started, they were carried away along with the others. Sometimes it happened that they were the first to be deported. Lately, however, no trainloads of Jews from abroad arrived in Poland. It is well known that the Germans carried on the deportations of Jews from abroad but no one knows what happened to the trains. From a Jew who had been deported from France a letter came saying that he was already in the van about to be deported and that 'we shall meet soon.' Neither he, however, nor other Jews arrived in Poland and nobody knows what happened to them.

"After Lublin came the turn of Krakow. Up to that time the Jews lived in Krakow in the Ghetto in the Kazimierz quarter. The Ghetto was not as isolated as the Warsaw Ghetto and there were Jews who used to get permission to leave it. A Jewish newspaper, *Gazeta Zydowska*, used to appear in the Krakow Ghetto and it was still being issued even in 1942. The notice of the death of Czerniakow, the head of the Jewish Community of Warsaw, appeared there. Then the Krakow Gestapo summoned the Jews in alphabetical order and deported them in groups. Even before this deportation the Jews used to be deported from Krakow, but the procedure was entirely different. They were allowed to proceed to Warsaw and other towns and they were given railway tickets. As a result of those previous deportations only physically strong Jews were left in Krakow, skilled workers between 18 and 35 years of age. Very few women were among them. It is presumed that in 1941 about 6,000 Jews had been left in Krakow, but since according to Goering's order Krakow had to be *Judenfrei* just as Lublin was, the remnants were deported in 1942. A part of the Jews were sent to so-called Jewish camp, Julag. One of those camps was at Miechow.

"After Krakow, terrible things were enacted in the town of Tarnow. Before very long there were 40,000 Jews at Tarnow. 10,000 were deported and 7,000 were murdered at the railway station. They were surrounded by machine-guns and simply fired on. The soldiers were told that the Jews had tried to put up armed resistance. Wounded Jews were buried together with the dead. At the beginning of 1942 the number of Jews in Tarnow was 79,000. The Ghetto was not so strictly isolated and in some houses the Jews lived together with the Germans. Then came the slaughter. First the wealthier people were shot. What happened in Tarnow reminds one of the terrible slaughter which took place in Wilno where on the Mountain of the Castle 50,000 Jews were shot in groups of 5,000 to 6,000.

"In Warsaw the deportations started on July 22, 1942 and lasted for 10 weeks. On an average 6,000 Jews were deported daily in special

trains. News would come in saying 'the action is going on' or 'there is a fire.' The deportation was carried on systematically, block by block of houses and street by street. They spared nobody; men, women and children were deported. Only specialists and skilled workers remained. Skilled workers used to receive special certificates. As long as the Germans had other victims for deportations, they were left in peace, only when the number of Jews liable for deportation fell below the figure needed did the Germans start taking specialists too. It is assumed that 420,000 Jews were deported from Warsaw.

"A lot of them tried to escape. Day after day fugitives were caught and shot on the spot. Particularly cruel was the treatment of the Jews by the Ukrainian Police.

"In Piotrkow, a special commission of Gestapomen arrived on October 13th, 1942. At 6 a.m. the Ghetto was surrounded by the Ukrainian police. House after house was emptied of its inhabitants, and the Jews were driven in groups to a square. Those who proved to be in possession of labor cards issued by the German authorities, remained. Others were led in groups to the railway and carried away in special freight cars. The Germans had planned to leave 3,000 Jews in Piotrkow out of the entire population of 25,000, but later on an order was received from Radom to the effect that the number of Jews to remain at Piotrkow was not to exceed 2,600, so a further 400 were caught and deported. Many of the skilled workers and artisans did not wish to part with their families and gave up the chance of remaining. The Germans would frequently check those who were to go and those who were to remain. On one occasion, 83 persons were missing out of a party bound for deportation. The Gestapo turned to a factory where the Jews were employed and demanded the surrender of 83 of the workers. The manager of the factory resisted the demand and as a result of hard bargaining only 30 were given to the Gestapo, mostly those who seemed physically unfit. During the selection heart-rending scenes were enacted because the victims knew they were going to their death.

"The deported are packed into freight cars, 70 to 90 people in each, or, at Radom, 150 people in each. The vans are guarded by the German police and nobody is allowed to approach them.

"It is known by now that the trains go to Malkinia and from there to Treblinka. At Treblinka all traces disappear and it is impossible to know what happens to those people.

"A young Jew deported from Czestochowa told me that he had been on one of these trains bound for Treblinka. Before Treblinka the Ger-

mans had taken all the tailors out of the train. He was among them. At Treblinka the Germans gave them the clothing of the Jews to have them ripped up and searched for jewelry. He went on to relate that every day trainloads of deportees arrived in Treblinka. The Jews from the trains were taken to a separate brick building and ordered to undress, allegedly for a bath. What was going on inside the building no one was able to tell for nobody succeeded in getting out of it. My informer saw a fence there. He was told that behind the fence were heaps of ashes from the burned bodies of Jews. Workmen who had been working together with my informer told him that the Jews, after being stripped naked had been taken to a chamber in the building, where they were suffocated and their bodies were burned. Others told him that Jews were gassed in the chamber. No exact details were obtainable. One thing is positively known; that nobody left the building alive and that heaps of ashes were being continually carried out of the house. He alone succeeded in escaping before he entered the building."

Y. S. states as follows:

"It is known to me that Moses Szczeranski, the former official at the Palestinian Office in Warsaw, was murdered by the Germans a couple of days before *Rosh-Hashanah*, and his son Isaac was killed in the evening of *Yom Kippur*. My father and mother were killed on the day of the expulsion from Radom. Several days before the *Shevuot* holidays in 1942, we got information that the Jewish Community was ordered to prepare a census of all the Radom Jews. There were to be separate lists, for (a) children up to 13 years of age; (b) from 13 to 25; (c) from 35 to 60; (d) over 60. This news terrified us because we knew all about the terrible deportation from Lublin which had taken place some time before; all sick people and children had been murdered there, the majority of people sent away in vans, over 150 people in each, and the remaining part carried away to labor at Majdan Tatarski in the vicinity of Lublin.

"When the lists were delivered to the Germans the working people were summoned to the Gestapo to be given so-called *Meldekarten*. On Tuesday a week or so before *Tisha b' av*, at dawn we noticed some disquieting preparations in the small Ghetto of Glinice. The policemen were installing big bulbs in the street lamps, drawing additional electric cables and setting numerous lights along the streets. We huddled in our houses and sat there shivering from fear of the approaching disaster. During the night, at 9 or 10 o'clock we heard marching steps in the street! Groans and cries were heard and the policemen announced a

through the window and saw detachments of armed soldiers marching or driving in cars. All at once all lights in the street flared up and the command came: 'Open the doors and windows, everybody out in the street!' Groans and cries were heard and the policemen announced a second command: 'All those in possession of the *Meldekarten* were to appear within ten minutes in Kosna Street, all other Jews to appear at the same time in Dolna and Graniczna Streets.' A frenzy fell on the Ghetto; running, fleeing, hunting, shouts, cries and heart-rending groans, and every moment shots, shots everywhere.

"While I was in Kosna Street I heard frightful salvos coming from Dolna Street. It sounded like a battlefield. Every moment young men with *Meldekarten* would join us coming from the direction of Dolna Street and at the same time a new order was given to the effect that those not in possession of the *Meldekarten* should immediately go over to Dolna Street, otherwise they would be shot on the spot. The checking up of the documents was started. Those who were there with their children and had no *Meldekarten* were given the choice to either give away the children who were to be driven to Dolna Street or to proceed there with them. I heard a Gestapoman say to a mother: 'If you want to stay here—*dann schmeiss weg das Dreck*' (throw away the filth. Almost all the mothers went over to Dolna Street with their children. In the course of checking up the documents and clearing those who had no *Meldekarten*, we were frequently ordered to turn and face the wall and then heard shots behind us.

"After the process of cleaning up only 18 women and 800 men remained in Kosna Street. We all were standing there filled with terror and listening to the shots and groans coming to us from the direction of Dolna Street. The Gestapomen who guarded us set dogs at us several times. The dogs sprang at us furiously, jumped on our backs and tore our clothing, and while all this was going on the Gestapomen who looked on laughed and were delighted at the sight.

"At four o'clock in the morning we were taken to the Big Ghetto (in the Wal quarter) in order to be registered at the Labor Office.

"Half an hour later a new outcry broke out, this time in the Big Ghetto. It turned out that the deportation was being carried out in several streets of that Ghetto as well. This lasted for two hours and in the meantime we saw carts with young Jews equipped with shovels who proceeded to bury the killed in Graniczna and Dolna Streets. All the victims were buried in one common grave. After the deportation not a single Jew remained in the small Ghetto of the Glinice quarter. A fortnight later the deportation from the Big Radom Ghetto followed.

When I noticed the preparations, the installing of big electric lamps in the streets, etc., I knew what was going to happen. I removed my yellow patch and stole away to the Polish quarter. There I hid myself till the deportation was over."

N., a refugee from Sosnowiec, stated as follows:

"On May 12, 1942, the first 1,200 Jews, of the so-called unemployed class, were deported from Sosnowiec. They were each permitted to take along 10 kilograms of baggage and 10 marks of ready money. The whereabouts of the deportees were unknown.

"On August 12, 1942, a new decree ordered all Jews to gather on the Johann Strasse ostensibly to have their passports stamped. All Jews, thirty-three thousand in number, men, women and children, came to the appointed place where the Germans proceeded to divide them into four categories. Those who worked for the government in Sosnowiec were permitted to go home after standing on their feet all night. A second group was sent to Germany for forced labor. A third group consisted of people permitted to apply for work. The rest, including the wives and children of Jews left in Sosnowiec, were to be deported.

"The latter were made to stand for 48 hours on the same spot without food or drink. Later they were driven into a small building where children were placed in cradles, some to be shot in sight of their mothers. Bread was offered to the hungry Jews, but anyone who approached was dealt cruel blows by the Germans. All those present were divided into several groups, out of which six thousand were to be deported to an unknown destination. They were thrown into crowded railway cars, and some of the corpses of those shot or hanged were thrown in together with the living victims.

"In October a new registration was announced for all Jews in Sosnowiec who were divided into three categories: those holding blue cards and permitted to live in the ghetto; those holding green cards to be deported, and holders of yellow cards whose fate was yet to be decided. An epidemic of mass suicides began among the holders of the green cards who preferred to die on the spot rather than be deported to an unknown destination. There also began a wholesale deportation of many Jews guilty of alleged violations of numerous regulations to the dread concentration camp of Oswiecim."

A Palestinian Jew, who came to Palestine from Lawoczne, a small Galician town, reported the following:

"In July, 1942, Gestapo agents came from Drohobycz and, with the aid of Ukrainian police (the police commandant was Michal

Szepena) they seized 15 Jews of those deported from Hungary. The 15 were shot and buried near the railway station of Lawoczne in a common grave. I, myself, witnessed the massacre.

"On September 2, 1942, the Gestapo issued an order to deport all Jews from Lawoczne. We were 40 families, altogether about 160 souls. The border garrisons, the Gestapo, the Ukrainian militia and the members of the Ukrainian UNDO (paramilitary organization) were mobilized. All Jewish houses and part of the forest where Jews worked, were surrounded and all the Jews were taken to Skole. The distance between Lawoczno and Skole (50 kilometers) had to be covered on foot. Several elderly Jews were shot dead on the spot. Among these were the 65 year-old Abraham Tichman, the 70 year-old Salomon Lerner, the 65 year-old Mozes Spanzer and others.

"I myself then fled to the Hungarian border. I was pursued by the forest guards. I hid in the woods and waited till evening. At night I went further towards the border station Wolowiec. From there I went to Budapest. In Budapest I later found two Jews, our neighbors in Lawoczne, Wolf Reder and Lipa Teichman. They told me that at Skole all the Jews of Lawoczne and other villages in the district had been pushed into railway cars bound for Belzec (the place where mass-murders of Jews took place). The two of them fled from the railway station. They also told me that when Jews were being thrown into the cars, the Nazis shot many Jews. Into each car were thrown from 150 to 200 people. When the Jews began to cry that they had no air, the Gestapo murderers began firing their machine guns at the cars shouting, *Jetzt werdet ihr schon Luft haben.*

"Two weeks later there came to Budapest two Jews from Stryj, Munia Schechter and Bentscher. They told me that in September, 1942, the Germans had sent out of Stryj transports of Jews to an unknown destination. The two had escaped from the railway cars. According to their reports there had remained in Stryj at that time 300-400 Jews engaged at various work. Later the Jew, Wang who was the owner of a furniture factory in Stryj came to Budapest. He said only 400 Jews had remained in Stryj.

"While I was still in Lawoczne I had contact with Stanislawow, where my sister-in-law came from and where her parents still lived. They kept on telling us of mass-murders. On June 15, 1942, the ghetto of Stanislawow was set on fire, many Jews were burned to death. In August, 1942, there were only 3000 Jews in Stanislawow. This is what my brother's father-in-law wrote.

"Reports of mass-murders reached us from Kolomyja. In August, 1942, a friend wrote to us that in Kolomyja there were only 1000 Jews left.

"About Lwow we heard in August, 1942, that it had only 5,000-6000 Jews."

DOCUMENTS

ORDER OF DEPORTATION NOTICE

1. By order of the German authorities all Jews living in Warsaw, without regard to age or sex, are to be deported to the East.
2. The following are excluded from the deportation order.
 - (a) All Jews employed by the German authorities or enterprises, who can produce adequate proof of the fact.
 - (b) All Jews who are members and employees of the Jewish Council according to their status on the day of publication of this order.
 - (c) All Jews employed in firms belonging to the German Reich who can produce adequate proof of the fact.
 - (d) All Jews capable of work, who so far have not been included in the process of employment: these are to be barracked in the Jewish quarter.
 - (e) All Jews belonging to the Jewish civil police.
 - (f) All Jews belonging to the staffs of Jewish hospitals, or belonging to Jewish disinfectant columns.
 - (g) All Jews who are close members of the families of persons covered in (a) to (f). Only wives and children are members of families.
 - (h) All Jews who on the first day of the transportation are in one of the Jewish hospitals and are not qualified to be discharged.
The impossibility of discharge must be attested by a doctor who will be appointed by the Jewish Council.
3. Each deportee Jew is entitled to take fifteen kilogrammes of his personal possessions, as travelling baggage. Baggage weighing more than fifteen kilogrammes will be confiscated. All valuable articles, such as money, jewelry, gold, etc., can be taken. Food should be taken sufficient for three days.
4. Deportation begins on July 22nd, 1942, at 11 A. M.
5. Punishments:
 - (a) Any Jew who is not included among persons specified under par. 2 points (a) and (c) and so far not entitled to do so, who leaves the Jewish quarter after the action of deportation has begun will be shot.
 - (b) Any Jew who undertakes activities which might evade or hinder the execution of the deportation orders will be shot.
 - (c) Any Jew who aids in any activity which might evade or hinder the execution of the deportation orders will be shot.
 - (d) Any Jew found in Warsaw, after the conclusion of the deportation of Jews, who is not entitled to rank among the persons specified under par. 2 points (a) and (h) will be shot.

JEWISH COUNCIL IN WARSAW
Warsaw, July 22, 1942.

REMARKS

On July 22, 1942, at a meeting which took place in the main building of the Jewish Council in Warsaw, the Delegate for Resettlement Matters issued an order to the effect that all institutions in the Jewish Quarter, such as the Board of Supplies, the Jewish Social Self-Help, the Supply-Delivery Society, the Cooperative Bank, the Health Chamber, the Artisans' Association, the St. Heyman & Co. Waste Removal Enterprise, etc. were to be subordinated to the Chairman of the Jewish Council in Warsaw. The employees of these institutions were to be treated equally with the employees of the Jewish Council in Warsaw. The same applied to persons employed by the Commissary Administration of Secured Real Estates in Warsaw, in the territory of the Jewish Quarter of Warsaw.

ANNOUNCEMENT

It is hereby announced, upon the order of the Delegate for Resettlement Matters, that all Jews working in German enterprises or for the benefit of the Germans are without fail to continue their work during the resettlement.

Anyone not complying with this order will be severely punished.

JEWISH COUNCIL IN WARSAW
Warsaw, July 22, 1942.

NOTICE.

I hereby announce to the inhabitants subject to deportation, in accordance with the orders of the Authorities, that each person who reports voluntarily for deportation on the days of July 29, 30 and 31, will be supplied with food, i.e. 3 kg. of bread and 1 kg. of marmalade.

The gathering point and the place for the food distribution is Stawki Square, corner of Dziką Street.

CHIEF OF THE MILITIA
Warsaw, July 29, 1942.

NOTICE.

To the inhabitants of the house at No..... Street.....

In connection with the resettlement action which has begun, I announce, that all persons living in this house, subject to resettlement, must report on1942 at the assembly point in the hospital at 6-8 Stawki Street.

Failure to report by persons subject to resettlement and registered (as inhabitants) in this house as of July 20 of this year, will be followed by most severe punishment.

Families which report together will not be separated. Luggage may not exceed 15 kg. per person.

The date for reporting will be announced in turn to the inhabitants of each house in the Jewish Quarter.

CHIEF OF THE MILITIA
Warsaw,

NOTICE.

In accordance with the order of the Authorities of July 22, 1942, all persons not employed by institutions and enterprises will be resettled.

Compulsory deportation will continue without pause. I again ask the population subject to deportation to report voluntarily at the reloading place and I extend for another three days, i.e. August 2, 3 and 4, 1942, the issuance of 3 kg. of bread and 1 kg. of marmalade to each person reporting voluntarily

Families voluntarily reporting will not be separated. The assembly point for volunteers: 3, Dzika Street and 27, Stawki Street.

CHIEF OF THE MILITIA
Warsaw, August 1, 1942.

Under the order of the Authorities, the Jewish Council announces that all Jews living in the southern part of the Jewish Quarter (that is, south of Chlodna Street) are to leave the premises they occupy by Monday, August 10, 1942, 6 P. M.

This order does not concern workers employed by the firms of W. C. Toebeans and Wilhelm Doering.

Whosoever does not comply with this order, will be shot.

JEWISH COUNCIL IN WARSAW
Warsaw, August 9, 1942.

Upon the order of the Authorities, the Jewish Council announces that all Jews living in the blocks of houses enumerated below are to leave the premises they heretofore occupied, by August 15, 6 P. M. Jews not subject to deportation are to move to the remaining parts of the Jewish Quarter, north of Leszno Street.

List of block from which Jews are to move out: Elektoralna St., 4 to 34 inclusive; Chlodna St., 2 to 26 inclusive; Orla St., 1 to 14 inclusive; Solna St., 1 to 21 inclusive; Ogrodowa St., 1 to 35 inclusive, 2 to 10, and 16 to 34; Leszno St., 1 to 3, 7 to 51, 57 to 77; Zelazna St., 72 to 86; Biala St.

JEWISH COUNCIL IN WARSAW
Warsaw, August 13, 1942.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

Upon the order of the authorities, the Jewish Council announces that all Jews living in the blocks of houses enumerated below are to leave the premises they heretofore occupied by Thursday, August 20 of this year, 6 P. M.

Nowolipki Street, 22-98, 2, 4, 6, 5-17

Nowolipie Street, 4-22, 64-80, 1-17

Dzielna Street, 15-75, 2-60

Smocza Street, 12-32, 1, 3, 5, 15-39

Pawia Street, 1-31, 36-100

Wiezienna Street, 2-4

Lubecki Street, 1, 3, 5

Gesia Street, 39-105, 32-50

Gliniana Street, 1-6

Okopowa Street, 40-56

Zamenhof Street, 2-28, 7-9

Nalewki Street, 5-29, 10-24

Walowa Street, 1-15, 8, 10

Franciszkańska Street, 21-39

Mylna Street, 2-10

Gericht Street, 2-14, 18, 28

JEWISH COUNCIL IN WARSAW

Warsaw, August 15, 1942

ANNOUNCEMENT.

Upon the order of the authorities, the Jewish Council in Warsaw announces:

1. In the part of the Jewish Quarter in Warsaw situated south of Leszno Street, only those Jews are permitted to remain who are employed in the enterprise located there. Whosoever remains unlawfully in that part of the Quarter will be shot.

2. All non-working Jews are to report voluntarily to the reloading place—under the threat of being deprived of food rations and of compulsory deportation. The above applies also to members of families of working persons.

JEWISH COUNCIL IN WARSAW

Warsaw, August 16, 1942.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

Upon the order of the Delegate for Resettlement Matters, the Jewish Council in Warsaw announces the following:

1. By Sunday, September 6, 1942, 10 A. M., all Jews, without exceptions, remaining within the limits of the large Ghetto are to gather

for registration purposes

in the section bounded by the streets, Smocza, Gesia, Zamenhof, Szczesliwa, and Parysow Square.

2. Jews are also permitted to move at night from September 5 to 6, 1942
3. Food for two days and drinking utensils are to be taken along.
4. It is forbidden to lock the apartments.
5. Whosoever does not comply with this order and remains in the Ghetto (outside of the above limited district) beyond 10 a.m., Sunday, September 6, 1942, will be shot.

JEWISH COUNCIL IN WARSAW
Warsaw, September 5, 1942.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

Upon the order of the authorities, the Jewish Council announces the following:

Beginning today, August 25, 1942, no "rickshaw" driver may remain on the streets after 8 P. M., while no Jews may be on the streets after 9 P. M., with the exception of the Jewish Militia on duty at that time.

JEWISH COUNCIL IN WARSAW
Warsaw, August 25, 1942.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

Regarding street traffic in the Jewish quarter.

By order of the authorities I announce that, beginning September 28, 1942, only those Jews may stay in the area south of Gesia and Franciszkanska Streets who go to their places of work in closed formations. Return from work must also be in closed formations, the groups returning from the Ghetto entrances being escorted by the Militia. Persons who do not possess proper passes, and are found in the above district, are subject to resettlement.

In the area north of Gesia and Franciszkanska Streets, only such persons who are able to prove the necessity of their leaving their working-place may be in the streets during work hours. Street peddling as well as unnecessary standing about and gathering of passersby are strictly forbidden. Whosoever transgresses against these regulations will be resettled.

CHAIRMAN OF THE JEWISH COUNCIL IN WARSAW
Warsaw, September 28, 1942.

Upon the order of the Labor Office, Warsaw, the Jewish Council announces:

Change of working places may follow only upon permission previously obtained from the Labor Office, Warsaw branch for the Jewish Quarter.

Anyone leaving his working place will be immediately deported.

LABOR OFFICE, WARSAW
ZIEGLER, GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR,
Warsaw, August 24, 1942

TERRITORIAL DISLOCATION

THE two processes of dislocation and extermination are strongly combined in the tragedy of Polish Jewry since 1939. The destruction of the Jewish community was accelerated by the process of deportation and dispersal which started almost immediately after the Nazi occupation of Poland; it had been planned and prepared.

Whatever may have been the formal reasons, the pretexts given by the Nazi authorities for their decrees concerning the expulsion of Jews from their homes, the actual underlying reason was always the same, to initiate in this way the ultimate mass-destruction of the Jewish population. Loss of employment and property, and only too often death, was the immediate result of all such decrees, and the mortality rate among the deportees was incomparably greater than among the general population. The Germans hesitated to begin the process of open mass killing outright; they preferred to start with deportation. Even now the policies of slaughter and of deportation are so intermingled that it is often difficult to ascertain where one process ends and the other begins.

Not all deportations have the same effect. The most devastating are, of course, deportation from one country to another, particularly from Poland to the German-occupied territories of Russia. Carried on in the most ruthless and brutal manner, in overcrowded trains, without any protection from cold and without the most primitive conveniences or food for the deportees, a high mortality was an immediate consequence. According to official Nazi estimates, 30% of all deportees died on their way to their destination.* It should be taken into consideration, however, that among the Polish Jews this percentage was probably still larger because of physical weakness resulting from starvation under Nazi rule. On the other hand, when the deportees arrive in a foreign country whose Jewish population, if any (most of the Russian Jews having fled to the interior and most of those remaining having perished), is unable to provide them with any help and where as a rule, they are

* Report by Group-Leader Ferdinand Hiegs to Gestapo-Chief Heinrich Himmler, as quoted in the *Weltwoche*, Zurich, July 31, 1942.

condemned to forced labor under the most inhuman conditions, they are apt to succumb in even greater numbers than in transit. The survivors were in many cases simply slaughtered by the Germans. It must be assumed, therefore, that of the Polish Jews who have been deported from Poland, scarcely any may ever be expected to return alive, either during or after the war.

The effects of deportation immediately after the German invasion were not so drastic in the case of people ousted from their homes and driven to other areas within the limits of Poland. The distances were not so great and the inhuman methods of transportation were not necessarily so fatal as in the case of deportations to Russia. Also, the deportees might in many cases be able to get some support from the Jewish population in the new area, which, though miserably poor and itself persecuted, never forgot the sacred principle of Jewish solidarity. The chief physical result of deportation in this case was the loss of the economic positions of hundreds of thousands, which of course means the beginning of the process of extermination. There was also the anguish of forced parting from one's own home.

The least harmful from this point of view were deportations from one part of a town to another, as in the case of the establishment of the Ghettos. The hazard of transportation did not exist in such cases, and even one's precarious economic position might be maintained. Here the immediate connection between deportation and extermination was less conspicuous with the exception, of course, of cases where people were brought from other places or even from abroad. The economic breakdown and the mortality in the Ghettos arose mostly from causes which had little to do with the simple loss of former homes.

However, in considering the problem of dislocation of the Polish Jews, it should be recalled that apart from deportation there was another very important form of the migratory process—namely, the movement of refugees, the voluntary character of which constituted, to a certain degree, the only fundamental difference as compared with deportation.

The refugee movement is, as a rule, a movement out of the country, and its hardships might certainly influence the mortality of the people concerned; these results must also be considered.

The following movements of the Jewish population in Poland during the present war should therefore be considered in connection with the process of the extermination of Polish Jewry: (a) The deportations from Poland to the occupied territories of the East; (b) The deportations to areas within the borders of pre-war Poland; (c) The establishment of Ghettos; (d) The refugee movement.

Chronologically, the movement of refugees comes first.

It is difficult to estimate exactly how many refugees managed to escape from Nazi-occupied Poland to other countries. The rapid "blitz" tempo of the occupation of the country and the difficulties in crossing the border to another country made it possible for only a very limited number of refugees to escape to Rumania, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovakia and a few other European countries, whence they could proceed overseas, some to America but most to Palestine. Altogether the number of people in this category can be estimated at a maximum of 20,000 to 25,000.

On the other hand, a very considerable number of Jews succeeded in crossing the border from Nazi-occupied to Russian-occupied Poland, where in the first weeks after the occupation they were admitted without any great difficulties. The number of such Jewish refugees is estimated at from 200,000 to 300,000. A considerable part of them, approximately 100,000, were deported in the middle of 1940 to the interior of the Soviet Union because of their refusal to accept Soviet citizenship, and they had to earn their livelihood there under difficult conditions.

With the outbreak of the war between Germany and Russia in June, 1941, the largest part of those who remained, and with them additional hundreds of thousands of Jews from the former Russian-occupied Poland, fled into the interior of Russia. The estimates of the number of Polish-Jewish refugees in Russia vary considerably because of the immense stretches of land over which they are now dispersed; the minimum seems to be 350,000, but there are also much higher estimates, up to 500,000 and more, nearly 140,000 of them concentrated in the southern Asiatic republics of the Soviet Union, especially Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and others scattered all over the European and Asiatic territories of the Union.

As far as Poland itself is concerned, the refugee movement is of minor importance when compared with deportations. There may have been cases in the first months of the war when people fled from one place to another, and especially from places under bombardment to others which were considered safer, but the real mass movement of the Jewish population in Poland, which altogether upset its former distribution, had no connection with the free choice of the people concerned. It was in all, or in almost all cases, enforced.

First came the mass deportations from one province to another within the limits of Poland in connection with the formal incorporation of certain parts of the country into the Reich. Almost one-fourth of the territory of pre-war Poland and half of the territory which was occupied by the Nazis immediately after the outbreak of the war was separated

from Poland "forever," and "incorporated" in the Reich. This included not only those parts of Poland which before the first World War were German (the provinces of Poznan, Pomorze and Upper Silesia), but also considerable areas which never before had been claimed by the Germans, as for instance the coal mining district of Zagłębie, parts of the provinces of Warsaw and Białystok, and also Lodz, the biggest industrial center of Poland, together with all its environs. Altogether the population of the incorporated territories amounted to approximately 12,000,000 including over 800,000 Jews.

The deportations from those territories started immediately after their incorporation, having for their main purpose the speeding up the Germanization of the stolen territory.

Not only were Jews deported but also Poles. Altogether 1,500,000 people were ousted from their homes and driven to the Government-General, among them almost 500,000 Jews. Practically no Jews at all were left in areas which had been German before the first World War, as for instance Poznan, Bydgoszcz, Gdynia, Grudziadz, Torun and Krolewska Huta. Also from several other places with large Jewish populations, such as Kalisz, Mlawa, Pultusk, Suwalki, etc., all Jews were ousted. In Lodz, the largest Jewish community after Warsaw, of the Jewish population of 225,000, no more than 150,000 were left in February 1940, when the Ghetto was finally established.

However, this was only the first part of the process of deportation. It was soon followed by others, mostly connected with the mass expulsion of Jews from different towns, as for instance Krakow, Radom, Lublin, Plock, Oswiecim, Tarnopol and scores of others. Whereas in the case of the incorporated territories the reason given for the deportation was more or less clear, the same cannot be said of what happened during the following months and years. In the case of Krakow, the reason given was that no greater numbers of Jews could be tolerated in a town which was the seat of the Governor General; in all other cases no reason was given at all, and probably no reasons existed apart from the desire to bedevil the Jews and destroy as many of them as possible by driving them from place to place.

The "legal" basis for this mass expulsion was provided by the law of September 13, 1940, which authorized the organs of the administration to forbid the population either to stay in certain parts of the occupied territory, or to leave them. By virtue of this law, all Jews were ousted from the villages and hundreds of thousands were ousted from towns or sections of towns throughout the country.

It is impossible to state exactly the number of Jews who were thus

deported from one place to another within the limits of the so-called Government-General. However, even if no more than the same number were to be added to the 500,000 Jews who were deported from the incorporated territories, it can be concluded that of the Jewish population of Nazi-occupied Poland, estimated at 2,000,000, after a deduction of people who fled to the Russian-occupied part, almost half were deported from their former homes and places of residence.

The figure of 2,000,000 Jews in Nazi-occupied Poland does not include the great number of Jews who were deported to Poland from other European countries, especially from Germany, Austria, the Protectorate, Slovakia, France, Belgium and Holland. The estimates of that number vary widely, but can scarcely be less than some two or three hundreds of thousands.

The economic results of this process of deportation are obvious. People ousted from their homes will, as a rule, also lose their former status. The deportees were thus the first group of Polish Jews to be pauperized even before the general process of driving the Jews from their positions and their property began. The effects on the health of the deportees, though not so disastrous as in the case of deportation out of the country, were grave enough. This can be readily seen when it is taken into consideration that the deportations mostly took place in the winter without any protection against cold; that the majority of deportees were ordered to leave their homes within a period of a few days, in many cases a few hours, usually without being allowed to take along more than a few of their possessions. As happened especially in the first months of the war, they were driven to the half-destroyed Jewish section of Warsaw, where there was insufficient room even for the local population, or to small places without even minimum accommodations. And in many cases this process of driving people from place to place was combined with the direct physical extermination of those who were not strong enough to move as quickly as ordered by the German oppressors. There were also many cases of people being driven from place to place and not being allowed to stay in any of them. Under such conditions, a very considerable portion of the expelled population perished.

Somewhat different is the connection between the establishment of the Ghettos and the mass-mortality of the Polish Jews. The first Jewish Ghetto was established in Lodz in February, 1940; the second, in its final form, in Warsaw in October of the same year. Other Ghettos followed in Lublin, Krakow, Kielce, Czestochowa and in many other

places. There were even cases where several were established in one town, as happened for instance in Radom, Otwock or Konskie.

In the two Ghettos of Warsaw and Lodz alone was concentrated a Jewish population of over 650,000. The Polish Ministry of Labor indicated in the Spring of 1942 that the number of Jews in Polish Ghettos was 1,200,000. According to the estimates of the Institute of Jewish Affairs in New York for the early Summer of 1942, there were 1,500,000 Jews in the Ghettos; in those in Warsaw—450,000, in Lodz—120,000, Lwow—120,000, Bialystok—80,000, Lublin—40,000, Krakow—10,000 and the rest in other Ghettos, the exact number of which is not known, but was certainly well over 50.

Some 85% of the Polish Jews were thus entirely separated from any contact with the outside world as early as the middle of 1942. With the new German regulations of November 1942, even the few groups of Jews who had at least the theoretical possibility of communicating with their Gentile neighbors shared the fate of the overwhelming majority of their fellow-sufferers. All Polish Jews in the Government-General (including Galicia) without any exception were placed either in Ghettos, whose number was limited to 13, or in special places of Jewish residence, numbering 42. The process of treating the Jews as outcasts and lepers, to be separated from any contact with the outside world, was thus completed.

In this case also, the formal motives, if any, are of no importance. When the Ghettos were first established in Poland, sanitary and health reasons were given as responsible for this measure since, according to the German theory, the Jews were crowded together and lived in filth, and they had to be separated from the remaining population to prevent the outbreak of epidemics. This reason has been quoted several times, even up to the present moment, but it is clear that this is only a pretext for a policy decided long before and executed without any respect for the most elementary human considerations.

As has been said, no difficult problems of transportation was involved in the establishment of Ghettos, unless, of course, the people who were driven there were brought from other places either in Poland itself or from Nazi-occupied territory abroad. In many cases this may have amounted simply to shifting the Jewish population from one part of a town to another. The mass-mortality in the Ghettos must therefore be considered not as a result of the transportation itself but of the terrible housing conditions as well as of the complete separation of the Jews from the outside world, which made it impossible for them to

secure food to augment the starvation rations granted by the German authorities.

The part of Warsaw inhabited mostly by Jews, overcrowded even before the war and having lost a considerable number of its buildings during the siege and the bombardment in September 1939, now accommodated a population more than twice the pre-war figure (200,000-250,000 before the war, more than 450,000 in the period of the war up to the second half of 1942). The same happened in Lodz, where the poorest Jewish section, the famous Baluty, had some 70,000 inhabitants before the war and with the establishment of the Ghetto was supposed to accommodate some 120,000. Not much better were the housing conditions in other Ghettos.

As to the food, it may be sufficient to quote the following figures on the basis of material gathered by the Institute of Jewish Affairs. The bread ration allotted by the German Government in the second half of 1942:

in Germany was	79.3 ounces weekly,
in Belgium	55.5 ounces weekly,
in France	67.9 ounces weekly,
in Italy	37.0 ounces weekly,
in Poland	49.0 ounces weekly for the Poles, 15.7 ounces weekly for the Jews in the Ghettos.

The meat ration allotted by the German Government in the second half of 1942:

in Germany was	12.7 ounces weekly,
in Belgium	4.9 ounces weekly,
in France	6.3 ounces weekly,
in Italy	3.5 to 7 ounces weekly,
in Poland	about 8 ounces for the Poles, for the Jews in the Ghettos—nothing.

The sugar ration:

in Germany was	about 8 ounces weekly,
in Belgium	8 ounces weekly,
in France	4 ounces weekly,
in Italy	4.5 ounces weekly,
in Poland	9 ounces weekly, in the Ghettos about 1 ounce.

Fats:

in Germany	8 ounces weekly,
in Belgium	3 ounces weekly,
in France	3.5 ounces weekly,
in Italy	just over an ounce,
in Poland	2 to 4 ounces weekly, in the Ghettos—nothing

A few words must be said about the mass deportations which started first from the Warsaw Ghetto and then also from other parts of the Government-General in the middle of 1942. Nobody knows the exact number of Polish Jews deported in that manner, but it certainly must be counted in the hundreds of thousands. Almost the entire population of the Warsaw Ghetto—more than 450,000—and additional hundreds of thousands from other places were deported. This mass deportation took two directions—one to certain places in Poland itself, especially to the famous camp in Treblinka, where people were brought to be killed and where in all probability hundreds of thousands were destroyed; the second to the occupied territories of Russia.

No reports about the fate of the hundreds of thousands of deported Jews are so far available and nobody knows whether they ever will be available. The fact is that no one who was deported was ever heard from again, either because they are not allowed to write, the conditions of their life being such as to make it impossible for them to write, or because they are no longer alive. By the justified analogy with the fate of the Jews deported from other countries, it can be assumed that all deportees were condemned to forced labor, mostly in connection with the creation of fortifications. The conditions under which this labor is performed, without sufficient food and clothing and without adequate housing, with no regard to health and human dignity, with men being driven worse than beasts of burden, must necessarily result in a tremendous death rate, even greater than during the transportation. There are also numerous cases where the workers were shot after having completed their work, either in order to prevent them from revealing military secrets or because they were too weak to be further exploited. It will therefore be scarcely an exaggeration to assume that very few, if any, of the deportees will survive the ordeal of their present existence. They are virtually all doomed to perish.

If the cases thus far enumerated are added together: refugees, deportations from place to place, Ghettos, evacuation from the Ghettos, deportations to the East, and if the death toll in each of them is taken into consideration, it will be understood why the process of enforced mass-wanderings, with all its terrible consequences, is one of the main causes and perhaps the principal cause of the mass-death of Polish Jewry. How many Polish Jews have been affected by this process can hardly be stated even approximately, especially in view of the German efforts to withhold the truth from public opinion, and to create confusion by contradictory statements.

The Jewish population of Poland before the outbreak of the war

was close to 3,300,000. On the basis of the available figures concerning the mortality rate in the different areas during the war in Poland, it may be assumed that the excess of deaths over births among the Jewish population since the outbreak of the war and up to the end of 1942, was some 350,000 to 400,000; in addition 100,000 Polish Jews fell as soldiers on the battlefields or as civilian victims of the bombardment; some 100,000 to 150,000 were killed during the mass riots which took place especially in Eastern Galicia and in the provinces of Wilno. Altogether over 600,000 Jews died in the territory of Poland itself.

The German newspaper in Berlin, *Ostland*, in its issues of November 15 and December 1, 1942, speaks of 2,000,000 Jews in Poland, even quoting figures for different places. However, there are other German sources according to which the number of Jews in Poland in November 1942 was no more than 1,000,000. This figure is given by Swedish newspapers near to Nazi Germany. The number may also be deduced on the basis of the new regulations of November, 1942, concerning the places where Jews are allowed to reside in Poland. These regulations, as previously stated, fix the number of 13 Ghettos and 42 places reserved for the Jews; Jews are allowed to stay in no other places. Among these 42 Jewish towns there are 11, in each of which, according to the last population census in 1931, there is a population of more than 10,000. In all these 11 towns together, Siedlce, Lukow, Radomsko, Przemysl, Rzeszow, Tarnow, Bochnia, Grodek, Brody, Sokal, Buczacz, the total population amounted to 264,000. The remaining towns are small places with populations of a few thousand each; no exact figures for them are available, but if an average of 6,000 per town is taken—a rather high figure—then a possible additional 200,000 is accounted for.

Thus in all Jewish towns there is accounted for a population of less than 500,000.

As far as the Jewish Ghettos are concerned, few exact figures are available, apart from Warsaw, which once had 450,000 Jews, but about which we know at the present that only very few Jews remain there. The figures for the Ghetto in Lwow are approximately 100,000, and Krakow 10,000; the present population of the other Ghettos is not known. However, according to the last census the Jewish population of the towns of Stanislawow, Boryslaw, Tarnopol, Drohobycz, Stryj Sambor, Czortkow, Rawa-Ruska, Brzezany and Zloczow, was altogether slightly more than 100,000 (100,988). Even if it were to be assumed that at present 50% more people than before the war are crowded into those places, and if to them were to be added the population of the

Ghettos of Lwow and Krakow, the number still would be no more than 250,000.

Adding together the population of all Ghettos, including the Ghetto of Warsaw where scarcely more than a few thousand Jews were left, and the population of all Jewish towns, we arrive at a figure of no more than 1,200,000 Jews who may be now living in the territory of the Government General. If to this figure be added a maximum of 200,000 Jews left in the German-incorporated territories of Poland, then a figure of 1,400,000 is obtained for the entire territory of Poland. Since the original population was 2,150,000, it appears that some 900,000 to 1,000,000 Jews were either killed by the Germans in the second half of 1942 or were deported to the East under the conditions described above and which mean the extermination of all these people within a very short period.

It may, therefore, be sufficient to stress once more, that of the 1,900,000 Polish Jews who cannot be accounted for, the majority in all probability perished in the process of deportation, and, especially since the middle of 1942, by mass-extermiation, and the remainder, except for those who are refugees in Russia, deported for forced labor in the East and doomed to perish, unless a quick victory for the United Nations brings them liberation, together with the liberation of all the world.

No tragedy in the history of the world can be compared in its extent and in its results with this indescribable tragedy of Polish Jewry.



GERMAN SOLDIERS PUT THE FINISHING TOUCH ON
EXECUTION VICTIMS

Wir siegen, weil sie uns hassen

Julius Streicher

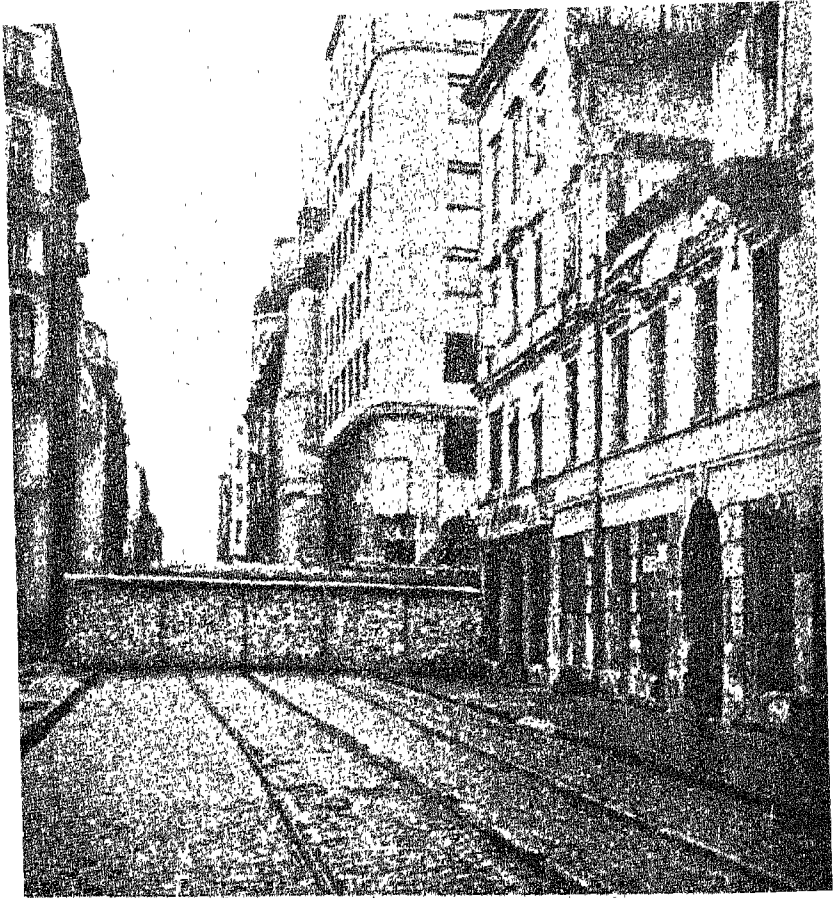
"WE CONQUER, BECAUSE THEY HATE US"

* Headline in Der Sturmer, newspaper of the notorious Nazi Jew-hater, Julius Streicher.



GERMAN GUARDS AND MEMBER OF THE JEWISH MILITIA AT ONE OF THE ENTRANCES TO THE WARSAW GHETTO





THE GHETTO WALL IN WARSAW CUTS A STREET IN TWO



RABBI IN GALICIA ON THE WAY TO SELL
HIS FEW BELONGINGS



JEWISH SCRIBE IN THE WARSAW GHETTO
Such scribes prepared the relief applications
for the Ghetto inhabitants.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

BIOLOGICAL DESTRUCTION

THE ultimate objectives of the Nazis with regard to the Jews in Poland are most clearly in evidence in the field of public health. Every ordinance, decree or regulation, whether of a legal and political, or of an economic and social nature, apart from its immediate object of inflicting hardships or death, constituted a step in the creation of an atmosphere for the Jews in which bare physical existence would become more and more difficult. It aimed to set up conditions in which their moral and spiritual resistance would be gradually broken down.

The Jewish Ghettos in Poland, and the places where Jews were allowed to live outside of the Ghettos, were converted into vast experimental laboratories in which the process of torture was brought to a degree of monstrous perfection which the most diabolical imagination has ever conceived.

Human beings became cripples and living skeletons, emaciated by hunger, sickness and slave labor. The number of deaths mounted. Children with old faces, with transparent skin, shriveled and yellow as parchment, totally bald and with shrunken eyes and with fear and terror written on their faces—these were the victims of the systematic process of torture initiated by the Germans in Poland on the first day of the occupation.

By barring the Jewish population from the public and economic life of the country, by placing them outside the law, by robbing them of their property, by locking them up in crowded and filthy Ghettos, by shifting them constantly, by mass-deportations, meager rations and slave labor, the Germans simply proceeded step by step in their coldly premeditated plan to exterminate three and a half million people in a tightly shut region in Eastern Europe isolated from the rest of the world.

The later mass-murders were a new and drastic departure betraying the fear of the Nazis that the methods they had theretofore pursued might fall short of accomplishing the ends they had in view. The new methods differed in that they were more open, more direct and swifter in their tempo than the slow process of strangulation of the first two years.

In our examination of the circumstances affecting the health of the Jews in Poland we shall for the present leave out of account the mass-murders and executions. These belong more properly to criminal statistics rather than to a chapter on social hygiene. Our present treatment will be confined to the effects of the New Order over a lengthy period in the major part of the Government-General—specifically the Ghettos, deportations, forced labor, hunger-rations and similar measures which led to the eventual physical collapse of the Jewish population in Poland.

THE GHETTOS

Before the beginning of 1942 about 60% of the entire Jewish population in Poland, or about one and a quarter million, lived in Ghettos, or in special districts shut off from the rest of the world by high walls covered with barbed wire and broken glass. The remaining 40% were concentrated in various towns in special districts, their freedom of movement and of communication with the surrounding world severely limited.

In a statement on the attitude of the Nazis toward the Jews and on their plans for the future, Fischer, the Nazi Warsaw district chief, expresses himself as follows: "The Jews must adjust themselves to all conditions, but we shall endeavor to create such conditions for them as will make the adjustment difficult."

In reality, however, the conditions of Jewish life have exceeded that cynical statement. The Ghettos and the districts where Jews had to live made it not merely difficult for the Jews to adjust themselves to these conditions, but literally impossible to live.

The plan to transform the Ghetto into a prison in which a normal existence would become "difficult" was evident in the choice of the filthiest and most congested district for its location, in the delimitation of its boundaries in such a manner as to exclude all parks, gardens or rivers, in forbidding its inhabitants to have any communication with the outside world, in the severe penalties provided for crossing its boundaries, in barring the entry of all goods and victuals, as well as in many other measures.

The effect produced was to shut the Jews in an overcrowded prison surrounded by a strong guard where they were doomed to perish of fear, hunger and sickness.

What was the official reason given by the Nazis for the introduction of separate Ghettos for the Jews? Besides the usual explanation that Jews must be isolated in order to "prevent sabotage and speculation," the main pretext given was the "danger" to the general population, and

especially to the German army, of being contaminated by the epidemics rampant among the Jews.

It is true that at that time, in the fall of 1940, the epidemic situation seemed quite serious. This was especially true in places which had suffered from bombardment and where the houses were ruined, damaged or burned, and where sewerage systems had been put out of commission. The situation became even worse when the population began to feel the lack of food, clothing, soap, fuel and disinfectants, when the public baths could no longer be maintained, and when the confiscation of hospitals rendered impossible the isolation of those stricken by epidemics.

What, in the circumstances, was the duty of a prudent administration? One need not know much about hygiene and epidemiology to realize that under such conditions it was necessary to keep the population from moving about, to vacate the overcrowded houses, to open as many public baths, laundries and hospitals as possible and in every other way to facilitate the fight on the epidemics caused by the devastation of the war. But the Nazi rulers applied the very opposite methods, and deliberately herded the Jews into congested and unsanitary quarters and deprived them of all facilities for fighting the epidemics.

In his desire to find an epidemiological excuse for introducing Ghettos for the Jews in Poland, one of the supervisors of the migration, Fischer, the Nazi commissar in Warsaw, evolved the following reasons: "Investigation has demonstrated," he told an American correspondent, "that the Germans are particularly susceptible to typhus; the Poles considerably less, while the Jews are nearly immune, although they are frequently the carriers of typhoid bacteria, and are for that reason especially dangerous to public health."

According to that absurd conception it would be necessary to strictly isolate, or even to introduce Ghettos for all those who have had contagious diseases and have acquired a natural immunity, or those who have been inoculated against various infections and have also become immune. As potential carriers they could become a menace to the rest of the population which has no active immunity and is therefore susceptible to the danger of infection.

The Nazi commissar did not stop to think of the consequences of his ignorance and of his preposterous theory, but he found the latter adequate for his subsequent drastic orders and prohibitions.

Under similar conditions during the First World War the German authorities who occupied Poland managed to stop the spread of epidemics by taking the proper measures. This could easily have been done in the present war, but this was not the object of the Nazis, who were

concerned with isolating the Jews, with concentrating them in special segregated places and creating such special conditions for them under which "they will disappear owing to hunger and need," the same Fischer, governor of the Warsaw district, said, "and nothing will remain of the Jewish question but a cemetery."

The Ghetto was the framework for all measures aiming at the "liquidation" of the Jews, such as deportations, hunger rations, forced labor and executions. The Ghettos were chiefly instrumental in lowering the morale and the resistance of the Jews who felt like prisoners within its walls and doomed to inevitable destruction.

The Ghetto as a factor of psychic confusion, of moral depression, of constant fear and anxiety, is the most tragic element in the sufferings and experiences of the Jews in Poland and its effects will be felt on the emotions and the mentality of the Polish Jews long after the Nazi nightmare has disappeared.

DEPORTATIONS

One of the most barbarous acts of the Nazi regime in occupied Poland, which cost tens of thousands of lives and caused innumerable tragedies for individuals, families and whole communities and was also responsible for incalculable material damage, was the mass-transfer of Jews. It began with the occupation, affecting hundreds of communities, and has been especially accelerated recently with the order to deport thousands of Jews from Warsaw and other cities.

By the middle of 1942 the number of deportees who had been forced to leave their permanent homes reached at least a million people. The deportations everywhere were attended by the most unrestrained cruelty. Tens of thousands of people were given only a few hours, sometimes even less than an hour, to leave their homes, usually in the fall or in the winter months, and many lost their lives and still more lost their health during these ordeals.

What was the main object of the Nazis in uprooting and transporting hundreds of thousands of Jews from entire cities, districts and countries and in applying such drastic methods in forcing a migration almost unique in the history of mankind? Was Poland close to the battlefield? Was she threatened by invasion or any other hostile attack which might justify the deportation of elements of whose behavior the Germans could not be certain in the threatened regions? The reply can only be in the negative. Poland, after its occupation had been completed, was not in immediate peril of invasion on any side, and the Jews were too beaten and cowed to be considered a danger. A certain

tension began to be felt only later on Poland's eastern borders, but that could not justify the transfer of a helpless "unreliable" civilian population from the West to the East, where German forces were being concentrated.

If we assume that the deportation had the object of ridding some important centers of war production of undesirable elements, then the question remains why the deportations took place all over the country in all districts, and why Jews were deported from rural districts in Western Galicia and small towns where there were no important industries at all.

But even if we concede that the Germans had in mind considerations of a military and strategic character, it is still impossible to understand the hurried and panicky manner in which the deportations were carried out. The deportees were not given any warning, were not allowed to take their possessions along, and were not even permitted to receive warm food or even water from people outside; they were shipped like cattle in boxcars.

The Czarist generals during the First World War who sought to blame their defeats on the Jews whom they accused of having spied for the Germans, deported many Jews, but only from the war zones to the interior of Russia. The deportees were given sufficient warning, were provided with tolerable accommodation, were permitted to take along their moveable property, and food and drink were admitted to them. Once brought to their destination, they were allowed freedom of movement and an opportunity of establishing themselves in their new places of residence.

But in the deportations of the Jews by the Nazis in Poland, Jews were moved like dangerous criminals on the way to prison, and in many cases simply like sheep to slaughter.

Nor can the transfer of the Jews by the Germans be explained by the need to supply necessary labor to military camps or for public works. The individuals transported were not only able-bodied workers but also women, children and aged people as well. Furthermore, the conditions under which they were required to travel debilitated most of them and killed many of them.

Why did the occupying power, whose interest presumably lay in the maintenance of law and order, in the prevention of epidemics and in avoiding additional burdens on the transportation system of the country so necessary for the armies, act in a manner to all appearances diametrically opposed to its own interests in deporting hundreds of thousands of people?

The deportations and the manner they were carried out can only be explained as a part of a general scheme to bring about the physical destruction of Polish Jewry. Some died on the way, the rest, robbed of their possessions, uprooted from their residences and herded into congested places under unbearable conditions, were to collapse under the strain.

According to an official report by the leader of the Storm Troopers, Ferdinand Hiegs, and Heinrich Himmler, about 30% of the deportees died on the way of illness, suicide and the hardships of the road. Medical observation of the deportees who arrived at their destination showed them to be a particular and distinct group differing from the rest of the Jewish population by their general physical and psychological state, by their reaction to their surroundings, by their weakened resistance to infection and especially by their exceptionally high mortality.

A report by the TOZ of Poland, the Jewish Health Society, on the systematic medical examinations of 9,330 deportees in the 93 asylum centers in Warsaw, notes that in one month more than one-third of the total number were sick and 281 persons died. This makes a mortality rate of 361 per thousand per year, which is 26 times the mortality rate of the Jews in Poland before the war and 4 times the already heavy mortality in the Warsaw ghetto.

The deportations in the barbarous Nazi style may justly be recognized as a convenient and efficacious method for destroying thousands of people without direct and outright murder.

The precise number of deaths due to deportation cannot be ascertained, but it was very high and can be reckoned in tens of thousands. The mere fear of possible deportations drove many individuals and families to suicide.

FORCED LABOR

By introducing forced labor of Jews under the brutal overseership of the black-uniformed *Schutz-Staffel* (the S. S. or Elite Guard), the Nazis took a further step in carrying out their plans with regard to the Jewish population.

Before the procedure of forced Jewish labor was regulated by law for the mobilization by the Jewish community councils, Jews were rounded up on the streets of many towns and cities and driven to forced labor. The Jewish communities themselves then approached the authorities with a plan for the orderly organization of forced labor.

Three labor groups were then introduced: labor battalions, labor camps and penal camps. The first were situated in the vicinity of the

towns in which the Jews dwelt, and they could return home after work; the second were placed in definite centers where large public work projects had to be carried out and the laborers were brought to those camps for an extended stay; the last were concentration camps designed for those who evaded regular forced labor or deserted or in any other way violated the forced labor law.

Men and women from the ages of 12 to 60 were subject to forced labor, but in practice it was usually men between 15 and 50, and in some places women of the same ages. The number of Jews mobilized for forced labor in 1940 and 1941 amounted to about 80,000 to 100,000 persons. In 1942 the number was increased considerably.

The work consisted of draining swamps, breaking stones, cutting down forests, regulating the courses of rivers, building bridges, dams and roads, loading merchandise, working in factories, as well as clearing snow, cleaning the streets, removing garbage, etc. The regulations concerning hours, overtime, vacation, protection of women and minors were not applicable to Jews in labor camps.

The workers in the camps lived in wooden barracks which lacked sanitary accommodations, and they suffered from the cold and dampness. Food was scarce and a day's meal consisted mostly of groat soup, ersatz coffee and a slice of bread. Meat, fish, fats, vegetables or any other such food were seldom seen in the camps. Were it not for the food supplied by the Jewish communities and food packages sent by relatives, laborers in the camps would have literally died of hunger. The situation was similar with regard to underwear, clothing and shoes. The authorities in charge took no trouble about these things, just as they did not trouble about medical service or even tools for the laborers.

The communities were responsible for supplying the required number of laborers and had to provide barracks, tools, underwear, clothes and shoes and even pay them part of their remuneration. The official wage was from one to three zlotys per day, and in some exceptional cases from six to seven zlotys daily. The purchasing power of such pay was equivalent to about five to ten cents in the U.S.A.

Forced labor constituted one of the several forms of robbing and impoverishing the Jewish population. It was a contribution in blood, sweat and health exacted from the Jews and was one of the methods of bringing about the physical deterioration of Polish Jewry, particularly directed against its most productive group—men in their middle years.

The law provided for two years of labor service by each Jew mobilized for it. In practice, however, few people could endure two years of forced labor, and they either died in service or were incapacitated by

illness and had to be sent home, their places to be filled by new recruits which the Jewish communities were forced to supply. According to official Polish circles, about 10% of the laborers died in service, of whom some 6% died of overwork, cold, hunger or unsanitary conditions, and 4% of maltreatment or by execution. The number of those ill with tuberculosis, malaria, rheumatism, ailments of the heart, etc., was undoubtedly much larger.

Forced labor under the supervision of the Schutzstapel developed into a mighty instrument of persecution which ruined the health and the physical energy of its victims. Pain and suffering, chronic invalidism and death were the portion of the Jews under the lash of forced labor. With their blood, sweat and very lives, at the cost of unimaginable suffering, the Jews of Poland bequeathed a rich inheritance to the country in which their forefathers had lived for many generations—tens of thousands of acres of drained swamps, dams, roads, bridges, causeways, and regulated rivers.

HUNGER RATIONS

The Nazi ordinances regulating food rations for the Jews served the Nazi aim of crushing the health and the morale of the Jewish population and reducing it to a state of apathy and resignation. In accordance with the statement made by Dr. Robert Ley, leader of the German Labor Front, that "an inferior race needs less food than a superior race," the Poles were given half the rations of the Germans and the Jews half the rations of the Poles. With this decree the doom of the Jews was sealed—to be denied minimum food-rations and to succumb to starvation.

The supply of food to the Ghettos and Jewish districts was often irregular and even the food to which the Jews were entitled by their ration cards was not always available. The result was a wild speculation in foodstuffs with prices about double that outside the Ghetto. This made the situation even worse, especially for the poor and the deportees constantly streaming into the Ghettos.

The food rations were not stable, and they kept on fluctuating, but for the Jews they were always the lowest and sometimes amounted to no more than about 9 to 10% of the normal calories required for each individual.

According to statistics compiled by the Royal Institute for Inter-

national Affairs, in 1941 the weekly food rations for the inhabitants in various Nazi occupied countries were as follows:

<i>Country</i>	<i>Bread</i>	<i>Meat</i> <i>(grams)</i>	<i>Sugar</i>	<i>Fats</i>
Germany	2250	500	225	270
Denmark	2425	unrationed	500	450
Norway	2275	unrationed	200	250
France	2100	360	125	100
Belgium	1570	350	231	106
Protectorate	1900	500	300	166
Poland (general)....	1750	250	150	62.5
Polish Jews	420	130	45	25

These low rations, insufficient for the maintenance of bare physical existence, were supplied very irregularly. Thus, potatoes were distributed in the Warsaw Ghetto only twice in 1941, in the spring and in the fall, and those who received them in the spring were not given potatoes in the fall and vice-versa. The rations of potatoes amounted to 4 pounds weekly per person. Meat was distributed only five or six times a year instead of each month. As for fats, Jews did not receive even one ounce during the year. The vegetables obtained by the Jews of Warsaw enabled each one to get about half a pound per month. The bread given to the Jews of the Ghetto was of the poorest quality, mixed with chestnuts, sawdust and other ersatz material. Instead of sugar Jews were given saccharine, and milk was given only to infants up to the age of one year, and to tuberculars according to physician's certificates.

The nourishment of the Jewish population in Poland in terms of calories as compared with the other populations of Europe can be seen from the following table prepared on the basis of information compiled by "Wartime Rationing and Consumption" and the International Labor Review:

<i>Country</i>	<i>Daily Number Calories</i> <i>by Food Ration</i>	<i>Relative Percentage of</i>	
		<i>3,000 Necessary</i> <i>Calories for an</i> <i>Average Worker</i>	<i>Calories Received</i> <i>by the German</i>
Germany	2,083	69.4*	100
Czechoslovakia	1,803	60.0	86.6
Holland	1,667	55.6	80.0

* Besides the official rations the Germans are able to buy additional food in the open market.

Belgium	1,363	45.4	65.4
Poland (Gen. Gov.)....	1,355	45.2	64.5
Norway	1,271	42.4	61.0
Italy	1,151	38.4	55.2
France	1,099	37.0	52.8
Greece	645	21.5	30.9
Jews	209	7.0	10.0

Some Polish sources compute the calories the Jews of the Ghetto obtain from the food they get by ration card as 184 per person per day (about 6% of the normal); others figure them as high as 594 calories (about 20% of the normal). But even the maximum figure is far from the necessary minimum of nourishment required for a normal human existence.

It is no wonder then, that diseases caused by undernourishment and avitaminosis, infectious diseases and epidemics spread among the Jewish population of the Ghettos and mortality there reached alarming proportions.

As early as in the spring of 1941, only one-and-a-half years after the occupation, an examination of 12,164 persons under the age of sixteen in Warsaw showed that 52% to 60% of them suffered from marked undernourishment and emaciation by hunger.

Children came to the dispensaries suffering from bleeding, peeling of the skin, edema, loss of hair, severe anemia and similar ailments resulting from undernourishment, lack of proper food, and fatal living conditions.

Adults, too, suffered from scurvy, avitaminosis, tuberculosis, etc., and many of them lost weight to the extent of 30 to 40 pounds, which meant that they were forced to use up their own substance to be able to keep up a certain degree of activity. It is easy to imagine the effect of this state of starvation which was aggravated during the ensuing years of occupation.

Poland has always produced enough food to take care of its population and to export some of it abroad. There would be no need for Poland to starve if the Germans had not plundered the country of its foodstuffs. In 1941 alone the Germans took out of Poland 800,000 tons of bread, 150,000 tons of sugar, 40,000 tons of meat, 1,000,000 tons of potatoes, 700,000 head of swine, millions of eggs, hens and other foodstuffs. If only part of the loot were left in the country the hunger there would not have been as severe.

The question arises: was the murderous oppression to which the

Nazis subjected the Polish Jews dictated by a deliberate intention to annihilate the Jews, or was it made necessary by the economic condition of the country where the complete lack of foodstuffs compelled the occupying power to apply these drastic curtailments of foods. The answer is obvious. Evidently the food policy of the Germans towards the Jews was mainly dictated by the deliberate design to undermine the Jews physically and hasten their extinction.

The above-mentioned principal factors in the physical destruction of Polish Jewry quickly accomplished the inevitable results. These manifested themselves in the outbreak of various diseases, especially those deriving from hunger, persecution and miserable living conditions. They led to the spread of infectious diseases and later to a shocking increase in mortality and a catastrophic lowering of the birth-rate. The consequence was the unprecedented drain from the Jewish population of approximately 700,000 in the three years of the Nazi occupation.

An examination of the various aspects of the physical destruction, and a comparison of all available data, leads to an estimate of the total losses suffered by the Polish Jewry. Until the Jews were isolated from the rest of the population, vital statistics compiled in Poland included the Jews and accurate information on the subject was extant. But since then the task of collecting data began to devolve upon the *Judenrat*, who were not in a position to do any more than the simple registration of births and deaths. Thus we have to rely to a considerable extent on estimate and conjecture, largely guided by the law of probability.

STARVATION DISEASES

No doubt, many cases of illness in the Ghetto were caused by undernourishment and lack of vitamins, fats and minerals, and consequently many deaths are attributable to the same cause. But it is impossible to single out the amount of sickness and death which are exclusively due to those causes and those which were only partly due to them. There is a lack of adequate and comparative statistical material, and the vital statistics on hand in reporting sickness and death often list merely a local ailment and not the patient's general condition. Even marked cases of scurvy and hunger cachexy are often entered among ailments of specific organs and not as cases of death from starvation.

Nevertheless, in the reports of the Jewish hospitals in Poland one notes many remarks that the high hospital mortality, amounting to four or five times the rate before the war, is to be explained chiefly by lack of proper feeding and by the weakened condition of the patients due to protracted hunger and undernourishment.

In the summer of 1940, only nine months after the invasion, the Jewish dispensaries in Warsaw, Lodz, Lublin, Czestochowa, and other localities were visited by many patients, both minors and adults, afflicted with diseases due to starvation (emaciation, malnutrition, anemia, bleeding of various organs, edema, meningismus, etc.). In the following years the phenomenon became more widespread. According to official Polish reports the average weight of adults in the Ghetto is 30 to 40 pounds less than normal, which means that the entire adult Jewish population is constantly hovering between life and death, since loss of weight over a third or a quarter of the normal is dangerous to the life of any individual. In view of the fact that the food rations have in the meantime not been increased, it must be assumed that many died as victims of hunger.

Accounts by correspondents who were permitted to visit the Ghettos, and testimony by many who escaped from them, give terrible pictures of children suffering from hunger, their faces wracked with pain and torment, yellow as parchment, with thin, transparent skin, protruding jawbones, fallen hair, and deeply sunken eyes. They also tell of many adults begging on the streets for a little food, who walk around hardly able to maintain themselves on their legs.

Guenner Gunnermann of the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* in July, 1941, records his impressions of the Warsaw Ghetto as follows: "The hunger in the Ghetto is appalling. People give the impression of living corpses. Their faces and eyes are sunken; and the tattered and filthy, and often also the fairly clean clothes falls off their shriveled bodies. Jewish life in the Ghettos is tragically dark and hopeless."

Since then the situation deteriorated still further and the late chief of the Polish government in exile, General Sikorski, found it necessary in a radio address in May 1941 to declare openly that "the Jewish population in Poland is doomed to extinction," and that "the population in the Ghettos is condemned to death by starvation."

How many people died directly of hunger cannot be ascertained. Some estimate the number at 150,000, others at twice that amount. All estimates are as of the period before the middle of 1942, when the new crusade against the tortured Polish Jew substituted mass-murders and executions for the slow process of starvation, disease and oppression.

MENTAL DISEASES

The harrowing experiences of the Jewish population under the Nazi regime from the beginning of the war, with all the accompaniments of

the Blitzkrieg, such as merciless bombardments, burning of entire towns, terrified fleeing from town to town, military occupation, sudden attack, plundering, etc., plus the ever-present emotions of worry, anxiety, fear of deportation, forced labor and death from starvation, all this was bound to result in intense psychic disturbances among the Polish Jews.

These manifested themselves in various forms: apathy, resignation, and the disappearance of the will-to-resist in people who have come to the conclusion that it is impossible and futile to resist a cruel and brutal force that cannot be overcome by human means, and who therefore bow to an inescapable fate.

Others, in their bewilderment and intense suffering, sought to escape their burdens by suicide. Again others underwent a complete psychic collapse and became insane.

Epidemics of suicides usually synchronize with waves of deportations or similar acts of oppression. In 1941 five times as many Jews committed suicide in Warsaw as in normal times; at the end of the summer of 1942 there was a new wave of suicides in Warsaw; in Lwow entire families put an end to their lives; in Lublin in March, 1940, 32 suicides were buried in one day.

We hear of many mentally deranged persons in the streets of the Ghettos. Some of them are former inmates of asylums in Tworki, Choroscze and Wadowice outside the Ghettos who were deported by the Nazis into the Ghettos of Warsaw, Krakow and Lwow. The only Jewish psychiatric hospital, Zoflowka, in Otwock, near Warsaw, was already overcrowded and could not admit additional patients from other institutions. That institution is reported to have been liquidated at the end of 1942 and the insane were driven into the Ghettos to mix with the sane.

The facts mentioned above which affect only individuals, are to be seen against the background of the remarkable patience, stoic courage and sense of collective responsibility and readiness to help displayed by the Jewish community of Poland.

During the occupation the Jews of Poland built up an excellent network of communal and philanthropic institutions, refugee centers, communal workshops, nurseries, creches, orphanages, ambulance stations, etc. A sample of the spirit with which the Jews of Poland met the situation can be seen in the following lines which appeared in an editorial in the Polish-language Jewish newspaper *Gazeta Zydowska* in Krakow:

"Our poor unfortunate brethren! We are certain that wherever you

knock at the gates, they will be open to you, and friends will say to you, 'Come in, be our guests, so long as you cannot find a house of your own. Wherever I sleep, you will sleep, my house is your house, my God is your God.' "

Such words could only be uttered by a group which has maintained its mental and emotional balance and kept its human and ethical qualities in a time of bestiality, and which managed to place, in the midst of its extraordinary sufferings, pity and humanity against the wickedness and brutality of its tormentors.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

Wars, famines and great human migrations are usually accompanied by epidemics and the rapid spread of infectious diseases. If at such periods the danger of epidemics is everywhere very great, it is exceedingly great in the ghettos and Jewish reservations where all the conditions are existent for the growth and mass spread of epidemics.

A population enduring acute starvation, locked in crowded Ghettos under the most unsanitary conditions, inhabiting dwellings without heat, water or plumbing and lacking in soap, disinfecting material, drugs, linen, shoes and clothing, with a scarcity of hospitals, bathing establishments, laundries and a greatly depleted number of physicians and medical personnel—what could offer a better opportunity for the mass spread of infectious diseases and a more favorable soil for the gigantic rise in mortality due to epidemics?

That the epidemics have not led to such fatal consequences as were wrought in times past by the plague, cholera, black death and other pestilences is really a sort of epidemiologic miracle. It may be ascribed, above all, to the fact that the Jewish population of Poland possesses an acquired immunity and remarkable resistance to infectious diseases; also, to the strict measures which the Jewish communities, health organizations and the Jewish population itself have adopted to maintain cleanliness, to isolate the sick, to disinfect dwellings, to set up bathing and laundry establishments, etc. all of which have been of tremendous help in combating the spread of disease. And yet the epidemics have caused a tremendous loss of human life and on the mortality list of the Ghettos they occupy a very conspicuous place. We will give here more detailed data on the most insidious infectious diseases, like typhus and tuberculosis, and will show what part they have played in the sum total of the physical destruction of the Polish Jews in the first three years of the Nazi occupation.

TYPHOID FEVER AND TYPHUS

Typhoid fever and typhus raged in Poland during the first World War. They were especially wide-spread immediately after the war, particularly in the Eastern parts which bordered on the war fronts. At that time the number of patients reached several tens of thousands and the mortality was much higher than in the years before the war.

As the conditions in the country became normalized, the number of typhus cases began gradually to subside and from 42,367 cases in the year 1921 fell to 14,258 ten years later, in 1931.

Through its entire latter-day existence as an independent nation Poland had not been free of this insidious disease. But some improvement was to be observed from year to year. This phenomenon changed rapidly with the outbreak of the present war, and the dismal condition which existed twenty-five years back recurred, but this time on a much more horrifying scale.

We do not have sufficient statistical data to enable us to establish the number of typhus (typhus and typhoid fever) morbidity and mortality cases in Poland under the German occupation. But the available data give us some insight into the actual conditions on the epidemiologic front especially as to the changes in the prevalence of the disease among the various sections of the population as compared with the situation which existed in the county for tens of years prior to the Nazi occupation.

From the existing data we see that during the first six months of the occupation (from October 1st, 1939 to April 1st, 1940) there were 13,000 cases of typhoid fever in Warsaw, 8,000 of them among Jews and 5,000 among non-Jews. No other figures are available for 1940. As to typhus, it was reported that in the last week of March 1940 there were recorded in Warsaw 281 cases, 268 of them among Jews and 13 among non-Jews, and in the first week of April, a week later, there were 305 new cases, 293 of them among Jews and 12 among non-Jews.

For the year 1941 the total number of all cases of typhoid fever and typhus recorded in Warsaw totaled 17,800; 15,749 of them among Jews and 2,051 among non-Jews.

Let us interpret the meaning of these figures in the light of official statistical data on the prevalence of epidemic diseases in the country which are universally known. First, as to the number of cases. In 1937, two years before the war, there were recorded for all of Poland 17,490 cases of typhoid fever and 3,477 cases of typhus for a population of 31,916,000. Thus, for each 100,000 of the population there were

approximately 55 cases of typhoid and 11 cases of typhus. If this proportion were to be taken for the city of Warsaw as well or if it were even to be doubled to allow for specific city conditions and the foreign occupation, we would expect in Warsaw for 1940, with a population of 1,300,000, approximately 1,400 cases of typhoid. The 13,000 typhoid cases reported for six months alone exceed the normal rate by almost twenty times. The same applies to the year 1941 when the Warsaw population increased by 100,000 persons due to the new influx and we might then expect the number of typhoid and typhus cases together to total around 1,848 ($66 \times 14 \times 2$). Actually, however, that number was more than ten times as high and reached 17,800 cases.

This may be demonstrated in an even simpler fashion. In the city of Warsaw alone, which contains only 4% to 5% of the entire population of Poland, in the years 1940 and 1941 there were annually as many typhoid fever and typhus cases as among the entire population of the country, including Warsaw, in the years before the war.

All this is the clearest indication of the exceptionally bad sanitary conditions which have prevailed in the country since the Nazi occupation.

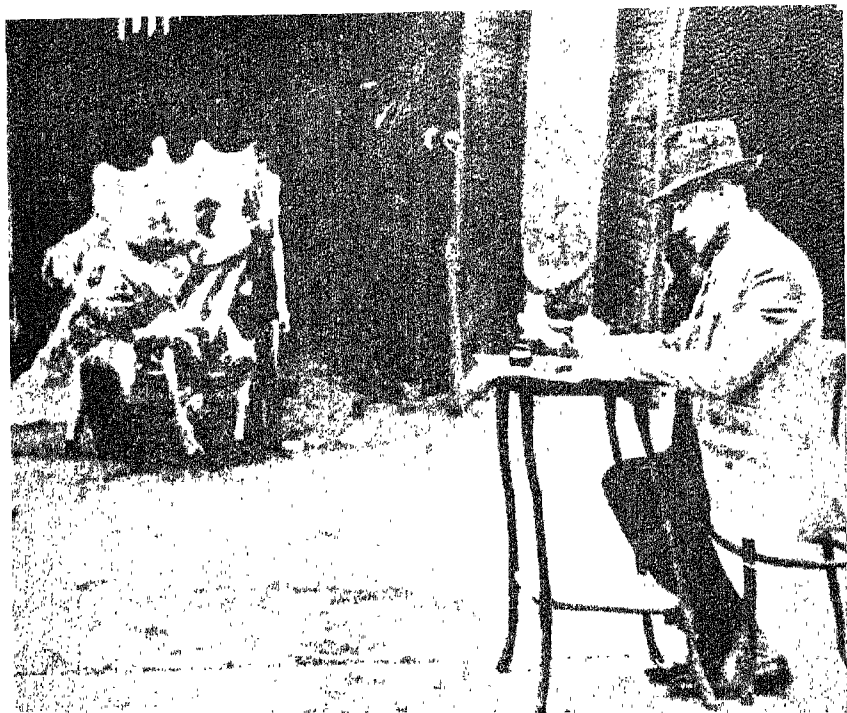
Deep changes have occurred also in the prevalence of the disease among the various layers of the population. For each 100,000 of the Polish population between the years 1924 and 1932 there were annually 331 cases of infectious diseases among non-Jews and only 145 among Jews. An indirect indication of the prevalence of typhus diseases among non-Jews and among Jews may also be derived from the results published by the Polish-Jewish epidemiologist, Dr. Ignacy Koniecpolski (Chestochowa) from research on 4,500 typhus cases in the years between 1920 and 1922. Dr. Koniecpolski demonstrated that mortality from typhoid fever was 9% among Jews and 12% among non-Jews; and from typhus 7.25% among Jews and 12.12% among non-Jews. According to statistics provided by Prof. L. Hersh (Geneva) the mortality from typhoid fever among Jews in Warsaw between the years 1921-1926 was one-third lower than among non-Jews (1.5 as against 2.2 for each 100,000 of the population annually). Numerous other data show clearly and unmistakably that both morbidity and mortality from infectious diseases was much lower among Jews than among non-Jews.

This proportion looks quite different now, under the Nazi regime. We have seen above that for six months of 1939-1940 of the 13,000 typhus cases recorded in Warsaw, 8,000 were Jews, that is 61.5% of the total, while the Jewish population of the city did not exceed at the time 38% of the entire population. By 1941 this proportion has already increased: 15,149 Jews and 2,051 non-Jews, that is 84%, while the

Corpses of Jews dead of starvation and disease were collected in the Warsaw streets and buried in mass graves. Over a layer of bodies earth was heaped and a second layer of corpses buried



BURIED IN A COMMON GRAVE



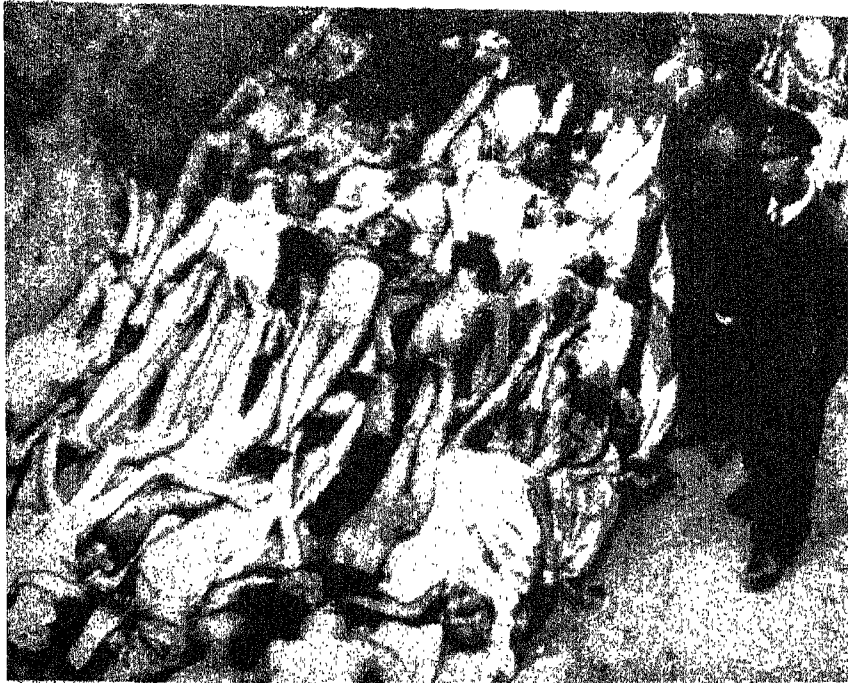
Above: Cemetery employee registering corpses brought for burial in mass graves.



Left: Corpses of victims of mass executions prepared for burial.



PUSHCARTS GO THROUGH THE WARSAW GHETTO STREETS
COLLECTING THE CORPSES OF THE DEAD



proportion of the Jews to the entire city population remained almost unchanged.

If we take the above mentioned official rate of 145 infectious cases among Jews for every 100,000 of the population and even double this, we arrive at the conclusion that in the first two years of the occupation the number of cases of contagious diseases among the Jews was almost ten times higher than might have been expected on the basis of all the statistical computations.

The situation is no better in provincial towns. We have no exact figures on the number of sick in the various localities but some data on health conditions in the provinces which appeared in the Polish-Jewish press throw a light on the question under consideration. Thus, we learn that in the first half of 1941 a severe typhoid fever and spotted typhus epidemic raged in Lodz. In the first three weeks of May 1,080 mortality cases of Jews were recorded there, that is, seven times more than before the war.

In Lublin, already after the deportations, there were in the local hospital 801 typhus cases.

In Krakow mortality due to infectious diseases exceeded pre-war mortality from the same causes by three and a half times though the Jewish population had been greatly reduced by deportations.

The rise of epidemics caused the opening of new hospitals in a number of provincial towns (Ostrowiec, Nowy-Sacz, Chmielnik, Otwock and others). The majority of the stricken were refugees from various regions. The causes for all this lie in the conditions to which the Jewish population has been subjected by the Nazis.

In the light of the above mentioned facts the assertion of the Nazi authorities that the Jews represent a threat of disease infection for the surrounding population and that therefore they had to isolate the Jews, set up special reservations and Ghettoes for them, deport them from their homes, etc. are nothing but falsehoods. Only after the Jews had been locked within the Ghettoes, only after deportation measures had been taken against them and the Jews were submitted to hunger tortures and hard labor, did they begin to show an almost galloping rise in infectious diseases and in mortality.

The Ghettoes were not created as a protection against epidemics, quite the contrary, the Ghettoes were intended to become and they were so cut out that they would, in truth, become the breeding grounds of infections and thus would annihilate and destroy the Jewish population of Poland quickly and easily without direct blood-letting, without mur-

ders and executions. This is the real reason for the Nazi policy toward the Jews in Poland, and for this heinous plan they bear full responsibility before the entire world.

TUBERCULOSIS

The same condition which exists with regard to typhus exists also with regard to tuberculosis, the classic companion of hunger, need, hard work and poor sanitary and living conditions. The following facts are known on the prevalence of tuberculosis among the Jewish population in the Gouvernement General.

The report of the Jewish health organization TOZ for the year 1940 shows that during that year there were under its surveillance 5,999 tuberculosis patients; 1,517 in Warsaw, 2,002 in Chestochowa, 3,000 in Otwock and 480 in Lublin. The same organization took care of 2,600 adult and 1,200 child incipient t. b. cases in various asylum centers.

Another official Polish report states that in the first half of 1941 the number of tuberculosis cases in Warsaw rose in comparison with pre-war years by 113% among non-Jews and by 435% among Jews. It stated also that in the same period there were in Warsaw 1,725 mortality cases from tuberculosis among non-Jews and 697 among Jews.

These are all the data we have on the spread of tuberculosis among Jews and non-Jews in occupied Poland. Apparently the Nazi censorship did not deem it advisable to release other figures to the outside world. But what is the meaning of these figures?

The latest TOZ reports compared with their reports before the war show an indisputable increase in tuberculosis patients both in the larger centers and in small towns. From these reports we see that in the same cities there were under medical supervision 2,850 cases in the year 1935 and 2,752 cases in the year 1937. The given figure of 5,999 tuberculosis patients plus the 3,860 incipient cases in the asylums shows an increase of 350% in t. b. cases. It must also not be forgotten that only a part of all tuberculosis patients are under the TOZ care, a great number of patients are under the care of special anti-tuberculosis institutions, Jewish hospitals, community ambulatories, etc. It may therefore be safely assumed that the actual number of patients is much greater. The Polish official report bears this out completely. Already after one year of the occupation the number of tuberculosis cases among the Jews in Warsaw had risen almost four and a half times compared with the pre-war period, while for the same period the number of patients among non-Jews increased a little over twice.

The change appears even clearer from mortality statistics. We have seen above that in a half year there were 2,422 mortality cases in Warsaw from tuberculosis. This number doubled for the entire year would give 334 mortality cases for each 100,000 inhabitants for a population of 1,450,000 persons which Warsaw had at the time. Before the war, in the period between 1935-1937 there were from 139 to 153 mortality cases (for each 100,000 inhabitants), that is, half as much as existed only one year after the occupation.

The proportion of mortality cases among Jews and non-Jews has changed radically. Among Jews it amounted to 279 for each 100,000 Jews (1,394 mortality cases for a half million Jews), and among non-Jews—363. In the years before the war (1931-1936) this number, according to Prof. L. Hersh, amounted to 82 Jews and 208 non-Jews. Among Jews mortality increased by 340% and among non-Jews by 174%. The proportion which was maintained between Jews and non-Jews for the six pre-war years and which proved that mortality among Jews was 39% of the mortality among non-Jews (Hersh), changed radically and in the first half of 1941 it amounted already to 77%. But while the Jewish population still manifested at that time a greater resistance to tuberculosis in comparison with the surrounding population, this resistance was cut in half (from 39% to 77%). The absolute number of mortality cases as well as the increase in tuberculosis patients indicate clearly the extent of the physical catastrophe in the field of tuberculosis which the Nazi regime inflicted on the Polish Jewish population.

CURTAILMENT OF MEDICAL AID

Several factors contributed to the physical deterioration of the Jews. Not least among them were the drastic Nazi rulings by which the Jews were suddenly isolated from the rest of the population and were completely cut off from all contact with the government and community institutions which served the entire population of the country. The Jews, like all other citizens, had been getting treatments at the university clinics, city hospitals, dispensaries, and elsewhere. They had been the beneficiaries of the various Government social and health insurance agencies which furnished medical aid to workers and other employees.

Locked up in Ghettos, limited in their movements, the Jews were no longer able to benefit by these agencies and institutions. Neither could medical aid be brought to them, for treatment by non-Jewish doctors, nurses, or other representatives of the profession was strictly forbidden.

The Jews in the small towns, where medical aid was both primitive

and scanty, were not allowed to travel to the large centers for diagnosis and treatment. The up-to-date medical institutions which had been built and maintained with Jewish contributions, were closed to them. Only their own specifically Jewish institutions, organized by Jewish communities and private initiative to supplement the work of government agencies, were left to them. However, they were few in number and ill-adapted to functioning on a large scale.

In the cities without separate Jewish hospitals the Jews had no hospitalization whatsoever; where Jewish hospitals did exist the number of beds was hopelessly inadequate. In Warsaw the largest hospital in Europe provided 1,200 beds and the Jewish Children's hospital an additional 300, a total of 1,500 beds for a population of over half a million, or three beds per thousand, while in the city in general the proportion was 5.94 per thousand, almost double. The situation in Warsaw was immeasurably better than in the rest of the country, but this condition did not last. The Nazis took over the Jewish hospital, confiscated the buildings, furniture, medical equipment, linens, medicaments, etc. The same fate befell the children's hospital.

The Jewish Council put up a makeshift hospital in the Ghetto with 700 beds. Supplies and equipment were no longer obtainable.

Besides the Warsaw hospital the Jews in Poland maintained 46 additional hospitals with a total of 2,400 beds, an average of one bed per thousand persons. This was a completely inadequate number, only half of the general average of hospitals in the entire country—itself a low figure. Compared, however, with the number of beds in middle-sized cities in which Jews mostly lived, the proportion was from ten to twenty times less.

The same looting and expropriation which befell the Jewish hospitals in Warsaw also happened to the well-equipped Jewish hospitals in Lodz, Krakow, Lublin, Bialystok, Grodno, Wilno and other places. In cities from which the Jews were deported the Jewish hospitals were taken over by the Nazis. As a consequence the number of beds available for the Jewish patients grew even smaller.

Besides hospitals the Polish Jews had other medical institutions, such as polyclinics, dispensaries, sanatoria, colonies, etc. During the twenty years preceding the outbreak of the war the health organization TOZ organized 368 medical and hygienic units in more than 70 cities. The communities supported hundreds of medical institutions. Not one of these escaped the fury of the Nazis. The ones that were not confiscated were abandoned during the blitz deportations. All the sacrifices,

aspirations and strivings of many generations which went into the creating of these institutions came to nought.

New institutions had to be created at once in new places. New hospitals, ambulance stations, baths, laundries, children's homes and first aid stations were opened. This is one of the most beautiful chapters of Jewish endurance and faith, of charity and humanity among the most harrowing circumstances.

All these heroic efforts were not sufficient to replace the work done by Government and municipal organizations. Unable to buy needed apparatus, instruments, and drugs, they could not satisfy the simplest demands. There were not enough doctors or other qualified help. Many doctors who had been mobilized into the Polish army were interned as war prisoners; many perished from the hazards of flight and migration; some were stranded in inaccessible places; many perished in Nazi prisons and concentration camps.

There was no influx of new doctors to make up for the scarcity of qualified medical help. Nor were Christian doctors permitted to treat Jews. It can be assumed that almost three-quarters of all Jewish doctors were missing. But even if it should be assumed that only 40% were missing, it would mean that out of a total of approximately 3,000 Jewish doctors in Poland no more than 60% or 1,800 remained to administer to the sick. Of this number about three-quarters, or 1,350 were in the General Government to serve a population of 2,500,000, an average of 54 doctors per 100,000 of the Jewish population, compared with the normal average of 168 doctors per 100,000 population, or 35% of the normal average; a glaring insufficiency of medical help especially during a period of numerous acute infectious diseases and among a starving and suffering population.

Add to this the lack of drugs and nursing personnel, of food, fuel, and sanitation and the picture of medical helplessness in the Jewish Ghettos is complete in all its staggering details.

The fatal and inevitable results of the tragic conditions of Jewish life in Nazi-occupied Poland manifested themselves in the outbreak of various diseases, especially those deriving from hunger, persecution and miserable living conditions, in the spread of infectious diseases and later in a shocking increase in mortality and a catastrophic decrease in births.

These combined factors caused a grave biological deficit and a critical decline in the total Jewish population of the country.

RISE IN MORTALITY

Up to the outbreak of the war the mortality in Poland averaged 150 per 10,000 (482,000 deaths in a population of 32,000,000 in 1937). The rate among Jews was smaller, an average of 100-105 per 10,000. This difference between the death rates of Jews and non-Jews was not accidental, but a constant occurrence in the country's vital statistics. We see for instance that in 1926-1930 the rate per 10,000 amounted to 167 Poles and 99 Jews; and in the later years, 1931-1935, the average remained the same with 167 Poles and 99 Jews per 10,000.

The situation changed abruptly with the occupation and with the establishment of the Nazi regime.

The low Jewish death rate as well as the low sick rate was rapidly and drastically changed by the Nazi persecutions. The data on hand, including tables compiled from records in different cities, offer us amazing evidence.

In the city of Warsaw, in the spring of 1940, there were 239 Jewish deaths per 10,000 people; in the spring of 1941 the number rose to 859; in the following September it mounted to 1,368.

Before the war, in 1936, the yearly number of Jewish deaths amounted to only 97 per 10,000 population. Thus the death rate in September 1941 was more than 14 times larger than in peace time.

When we compare the mortality of Jews and non-Jews in the same city of Warsaw during the first two years of occupation, we learn that Jewish mortality in January of 1940 totaled 45% of the general mortality and in summer (July and August) of 1941—75%. The Jews numbered only 30% of the entire population of Warsaw.

Additional proof of the increased death rate among the Jews in Warsaw is found also in the number of deaths among the patients in the hospitals.

In the Jewish General Hospital in Warsaw in the first half of 1941, 20.3% of all patients died and in the Children's Hospital 23.4% died. The same situation prevailed in the Children's Home where out of 607 children maintained there 125 died (20.6%).

In order to clarify the meaning of these figures, we will add that in the U. S. A. the yearly death rate among the patients in the hospitals was 3.9% in 1941 and 3.5% in 1942.

The plight of the refugees was even worse. In January 1941 their mortality reached the figure of 8% per month. It was a real plague which threatened to annihilate all the refugees in Warsaw within that one year. The account of other cities are similar. In Lodz, in December

1939, Jews died at the rate of 130-140 per week, and in May 1941 at the rate of 360 per week. In comparison with pre-war figures of 40-45 cases per week, the death rate increased 800%. There were 17,542 dead in 1941 against 2,000-2,200 before the war. We must not forget that many Jews left Lodz during that period and in reality the death rate percentage was much higher.

Lublin counted 1,214 dead in 1940 against 525 in 1938. During the first eight months of 1940 on the average 27 Jews died there every week, and in March 1941, 88 as against 9 to 10 death cases in March 1937.

We have records of typhus epidemics with high mortality in Międzyrzec, Rzeszow, Konskie, Skarzysko, Tarnow, Kielce. There were 1,500 deaths in Radom in the first three months of 1942 out of a population of less than 20,000. In Chmielnik, near Kielce, out of a population of 6,000 there were 104 deaths in the first five months of 1941.

These facts go a long way to substantiate the reports that dead bodies were left in the streets, that common graves were used to bury the numerous dead and that Jewish Community Councils petitioned the authorities for additional burial grounds.

The number of dead was great; the number of sick was greater still. The Jewish communities stood desperate and helpless in face of the tragic desolation which befell them.

It is impossible to know the exact number of dead in Poland. We can, however, make approximate estimates on the basis of comparative statistics.

47,428 Jews died in Warsaw in 1941. The Jewish population in Warsaw numbered then from 400,000 to 450,000 persons. The annual mortality would thus approximate 10% of the entire population. We will not assume this percentage for the entire country, because conditions in the province were somewhat better. It is far from exaggeration to figure the death rate for the rest of the country as one-half that of Warsaw, or 4.5%.

Since the Jewish population of the provinces in 1941 was between 1,800,000 and 2,000,000, it must be assumed, on the basis of a minimum death rate of between 4% and 5% that the deaths amounted to 85,000. This figure does not include Warsaw (the actual figure was probably greater). Including Warsaw the number of Jewish deaths in 1941 probably amounted to 132,928.

For lack of other exact statistical data we take this figure as a basis for our computations on mortality among Jews in the Government

General for the years 1940-1942. It would not be excessive if we assume that the mortality rate increased in such a proportion in the three years of the occupation that during each successive year it grew by at least 50% as compared with the preceding year of the occupation, since life for Jews under the occupation became progressively worse from year to year. Making certain corrections for the first four months of 1939 and taking only 7 months in 1942 (January to July inclusive) we come to the following numerical conclusions.

1939	Before the war Jewish mortality in Poland averaged yearly approximately 34,000 persons. Thus	
Sept.-Dec.	for the Government General which has $\frac{3}{4}$ of all the Polish Jews the mortality should have been approximately 25,500 persons per year or 8,500 for four months.	
	But this figure must at least be doubled since numerous deaths occurred in this period because of stark misery, persecutions, hunger, grief, etc. Moreover, this figure does not include deaths resulting from the war, pogroms, deportations, etc.	17,000
1940 (100%)	Mortality for this year may be computed on the basis of mortality for 1941 which we determined above (132,928). Assuming that in 1941 there occurred one and a half times as many deaths as in 1940 or, in other words, that in 1940 there occurred $\frac{2}{3}$ of the number of deaths registered in 1941, we may assume that in that year there died $(132,928 \times \frac{2}{3})$	88,620
	<u>3</u>	
1941 (150%)	The above given number of deaths.....	132,928
1942 (200%) Jan.-July	The mortality for this year as determined above we compute as doubling that of 1940.	
	Mortality for seven months of the year is expressed as follows:	
	$88,620 \times 2 \times 7$	
	<u>12</u>	
		= 103,390
	Altogether for the three years of the occupation mortality from natural causes amounted to.....	341,938

This figure does not include the many victims of mass murders and executions, which occurred in the last five months of 1942. These are beyond estimate just as they are beyond human comprehension.

Nor does this figure complete the list of losses in Jewish lives. We must add those who fell in the Polish-German war, those who perished from bombardment and fire, and those who were lost in the first frenzy of the occupation, as well as the many victims of the cruel deportations.

According to official sources 37,000 Jewish soldiers fell in the Polish-German war. It is estimated that there were between 60,000 and 65,000 victims of fires and bombardments, and that about 150,000 perished at the beginning of the occupation during the pogroms and massacres in every new place taken by the Germans and later in every place captured from the retreating Russians. All these regions were densely populated by Jews, and most of these settlements have been completely wiped out.

As to the deportations, even the Gestapo records admit that about 30% were lost in the process of deportation. Entire districts and cities were evacuated, and it is no exaggeration to estimate the number of deportees at a million.

As for the number of victims in these mass deportations we might conservatively assume over a half of the figure which the Nazis themselves give, and their estimate is certainly no less than 150,000.

To this we must add the victims of concentration camps. Only the figures from the concentration camp in Oswiecim are available to us. Up to the middle of 1942 there were 9,390 Polish Jews including 7,320 women registered there. Besides this there were about 10,000 Jews not registered. Two-thirds of them died within the half year and the remainder undoubtedly met the same fate, for the death rate there was 250 a day. (*Poland Fights*, 1943, No. 35.)

Thus the loss can be estimated at approximately 12,000 people. Since Oswiecim was not the only concentration camp in which Jews were tortured and done to death, the probable deaths in other concentration camps such as Maidanek, Belzec, Sobibor and others, bring the total deaths to at least double the preceding number, or 24,000.

The following are the general death figures during the first three years of the Nazi occupation:

Sickness and epidemics casualties.....	341,938
Fallen soldiers	37,000
Victims of fires and bombardments	67,000
Tortured to death in concentration camps.....	24,000
Murdered at the beginning of the occupation.....	150,000
Victims of deportations.....	150,000
Total.....	769,938

Before the war and the occupation the average number of deaths per year among the Jews in Poland was 34,000 (there were 34,000 deaths in 1937).

In three years this would have amounted to about 102,000. The Government General included only three-quarters of the Jews in Poland, therefore the number of the deaths in that section of the country would have totaled about 69,500. By subtracting this sum from the total of 727,938 we get a loss of over 700,000 lives directly due to Nazi persecutions.

DECLINE IN BIRTH-RATE

The same factors which aimed to undermine the health of the Jewish population in Poland, had a fatal effect on the natural increase of the Jews. We shall endeavor to draw conclusions about the general situation in Poland from the fragmentary data in our possession.

During the period from April to July 1941 inclusive the number of Jewish births in Warsaw was 1,475. Taking this as the norm we get an annual birthrate of 4,425 for a population of 475,000 Jews at that time, or 8.8 births per 1,000. The decrease was about 29% (13.1 births per 1,000 Jews before the war).

We have the figures on Jewish births in only one place outside of Warsaw, and that is in Lublin, which is a typical conservative Jewish community of the Polish province and can therefore serve as a correct index of the situation in the country as a whole. During the first year of the occupation, from October 1939 to October 1940, 603 Jewish children were born there as against 823 born in the previous year, a decline of about 27%. Among the children born that year were also those born to parents who were deported to Lublin from other places, particularly Krakow and the Krakow district, so that the number of children born to the Lublin Jews was smaller.

The estimate of a 27% decline in the birthrate among Jews all over Poland cannot be excessive, for the greatest number of Polish-Jewish communities, apart from those in the western and northern parts of the country, suffered even more than the Jews in Lublin during that year. On them fell the first fury of the occupation-regime. They were the first to feel the pressure of Ghettos and deportations while the first blows did not strike Lublin until March, 1941, when the Ghetto was established there.

In the case of Warsaw the decline in the birthrate was smaller, since in that city the percentage of births among Jews was always less than in the province. We may therefore estimate the decline in the birthrate

there as 20% which is consistent with the already determined decline of 29% in 1941, approximately one and one-half times as much as in 1940, a ratio which is perfectly probable and understandable.

For the years 1941 and 1942 we have no accurate data, but it is safe to assume that during these years of severe hardships for the Jews in Poland the decline in the birthrate for 1941 was one and a half times greater and for 1942 twice as great as in 1940. The same applies to Warsaw where we may assume the decline for 1942 to be twice that of 1940, consistent with the 29% decline in the birthrate for 1941, for unquestionably 1942 was a much more difficult year for the Jews in Warsaw than the two previous years.

On the basis of these estimates we can compile the following table of the decline in the birthrate among the Jews in Poland during the first three years of the Nazi occupation:

<i>Year</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Population in Gen. Gov: 3/4 of former 3,300,000</i>	<i>Birthrate before war 3/4 of 62,000 births</i>	<i>Decline in %</i>	<i>Decline in probable number of births</i>	<i>Probable number of births</i>
1939	Warsaw	330,000	1,437	No decline during		1,437
(Sept.-Dec.)	Province	2,170,000	14,063	first 4 months		14,063
1940	Warsaw	350,000	4,585	20	1,009	3,576
	Province	2,150,000	41,915	27	11,217	30,698
1941	Warsaw	475,000	6,240	29	1,815	4,425
	Province	2,075,000	40,260	40	16,104	24,156
1942	Warsaw	540,000	4,127	40	1,651	2,476
	(Jan.-July) Province	1,960,000	22,998	54	12,419	10,579
In three years of occupation.....			135,625	39	44,215	91,410

The loss of 44,215 new births added to the 650,000 losses in human lives by the war, by deportation, epidemics and outright massacres make up a total of 694,215 human lives, lost to Polish Jewry mostly through the brutal anti-Jewish measures of the Nazis.

BIOLOGICAL DEFICIT AND DECLINE IN NUMBER OF JEWS IN POLAND

During the past ten years the annual increase in the Jewish population in Poland amounted to about 30,000 persons, or 9.5 for every thousand, an increase smaller than that of the Polish population which was about 13 for every thousand. The difference was due to the smaller birthrate among Jews than among Poles. With the invasion the situation changed. The decline in the birthrate and the rise in the mortality rate among Jews brought about a significant decrease in the Jewish population.

The purely biological deficit—i.e., the surplus of deaths due to

natural causes such as diseases, epidemics, accidents, etc., over the actual births—during the first three months of occupation, amounted to 250,528 persons (341,938 deaths less 91,410 births).

But this is not the complete deficit or the actual diminution of the number of Jews in Poland during the war. The actual decline in the number of Jews amounts to much more, for to the biological deficit must be added the extraordinary losses, such as the victims of maltreatment, bombardment, massacres, executions, deportations, etc., amounting—as has been mentioned above—to an additional 386,000 during the three years.

Therefore the actual deficit and the general decline in the number of Jews in occupied Poland may reach a total of 636,528 persons.

If we should assume that the war had not broken out and that the Nazis had not occupied Poland for the three years since September 1939 then we could expect that the number of Jews in the General Government would by this time have amounted to 2,500,000 plus three annual increases totalling 63,000 ($\frac{3}{4}$ of 84,000 for all Poland) altogether 2,563,500 persons. After three years of occupation and Nazi terror, however, we must come to the conclusion that the total number of Jews in the Government General is less than 1,863,472 souls (2,500,000 — 636,528).

Unfortunately there is no reason to suppose that our figures are too pessimistic. The reports of the second half of 1942 about mass deportations lead us to suspect that we may have presented the situation too optimistically and that our estimate of the losses have been over-conservative. It is quite possible that the Government General had more Jews by the second half of 1942 because of the influx of deportees from other countries, but that does not alter the general situation, since our computations refer only to the Polish Jews in the territory of the Government General and not to Jews generally.

EFFECT OF EXTERMINATION ON THE FUTURE

Bio-physical processes and changes which take place in the life of a people always reflect the material and spiritual conditions under which the people lives. Historic upheavals and outbreaks make a deep imprint on the physical and spiritual structure of the population. The stronger and deeper the upheaval, the longer it endures, the more extensive it is, the greater its effect on the group organism.

Events such as have been taking place in Poland are bound to leave a lasting and far-reaching imprint.

Polish Jewry reacts with feverish convulsions to all misfortunes which history and fate have brought upon it. Constant positive and vital phenomena which had been crystallized and had taken shape in the course of generations, which were the result of constitutional resistance and immunity acquired through a long process of adaptation to the difficult conditions of the life around them, have suddenly broken down and disappeared. The low indexes of morbidity and mortality observed and noted by many students and statisticians as a positive phenomenon of Jewish resistance, were transformed into their very opposite, and the number of the sick and the dead have begun progressively to increase.

These are deep inroads into the physical stamina of a people, which seriously undermine its vitality.

The time is sure to come when the war and the occupation will be over and the Nazi nightmare will pass from the world. Jews will return to peaceful life, but for a long time to come the physical wounds and inroads into Jewish vitality and Jewish psychic equilibrium will not be healed. Jewish children, women and men who lived under the occupation and lived through the inferno of the German Blitzkrieg and all the horrors and brutality, hunger, fear and perils to which they were condemned by the Nazi regime, will remain with memories and impressions which are bound to affect their psychology and their nervous system for life—at least for a very long time.

The vital phenomena changed for the worse, such as increased morbidity and mortality, point to a deep shock in the whole bio-physical structure of the Jews in Poland, and it will take a long time for them to change and return to normal.

The deficit and the loss of nearly three-quarter of a million Polish Jews in a brief period of three years, caused by murder and violence, will not so easily be restored. Under normal conditions among a population of over 3,000,000 people such a restoration would require not less than twenty-five years. It is hardly to be expected that a population drastically reduced in numbers—perhaps by half—and tortured and emaciated, would be able to make good the loss at all.

The cup of sorrow and tears of Polish Jewry is full. The war still goes on. For the fourth year Polish Jews are under the Nazi yoke.

The latest reports from Poland are alarming. The gigantic Nazi machine of physical extermination is still functioning and brings with it death and destruction. Sad and dark is the outlook for the Polish Jews in the near future

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE OUTLAWING OF POLISH JEWRY

Right is all that benefits the German people; wrong is all that harms it.

HEINRICH FRANK, Governor-General of Occupied Poland in the *Warschauer Zeitung* of December 5, 1939

AT the time of the German invasion Poland was governed under the Constitution of 1936 which contained a provision to the effect that all citizens were legally entitled to equal right under the law of the land.

The occupation authorities issued a series of decrees, both local and general, affecting the life, property and dignity of the Jews in Poland.

JEWISH IDENTIFICATION

The decrees aiming to make Jews recognizable in public places date from the earliest days of the occupation. First in Lodz, on November 12, 1939, then in Kalisz, on November 14, 1939, and later in many other cities throughout the Republic, the local authorities ordered all Jews to wear armbands sewed on the sleeves of their garments. These armbands, whose color varied from white to yellow in the various cities, were to be ten centimeters wide and were to bear the "Shield of David" (*Mogen David*) insignia. On November 23, 1939, the Governor General issued a general decree (V.B.L. G.G. B.G.)* that, beginning with December 1, 1939, all Jews were to bear armbands with the "Shield of David" insignia as a mark of "identification." Violation of the decree was made punishable by imprisonment. On February 19, 1940, the decree was modified (V.B.L. G.G. Nr. 15, 1940) by providing that any violation would be punishable by the imposition of an unlimited fine or imprisonment, or both. Under local ordinances Jews failing to wear yellow stars were liable to execution.

The stigmatizing of Jews was also the subject of several additional decrees. Thus the executive decree of June 13, 1941 (V.B.L. G.G. Nr.

* V.B.L.G.G.B.G.: "Verordnungsblatt des General-Gouverneurs fuer die besetzten polnischen Gebiete" Since July 1940 the last words were suppressed.

55, 1941) supplementing the ordinance of October 26, 1939, dealing with the introduction of special identification cards for Jews in the Government General, provided that Jews were to carry yellow identification cards, thirty millimeters long and five millimeters wide, with the letter "J" imprinted in black.

Even property belonging to Jews was required, by a decree issued on November 25, 1939 (V.B.L. G.G. Nr. 8, 1939) to bear outward evidence of Jewish ownership, and Jewish shops were required to have the "Shield of David" insignia on their signs. Later, local ordinances appeared limiting Jewish shop-keepers to display only Yiddish-language signs.

According to another local ordinance all Jewish residences were required to display a sign on the outer door listing all persons domiciled there. (*Gazeta Żydowska*, January 17, 1941). Jewish doctors in Krakow were required, by an ordinance issued in November, 1940, to display a ten-centimeter wide "Shield of David" on their signs.

On July 24, 1940, the Governor General issued a decree (V.B.L. G.G. Nr. 48) introducing anti-Jewish laws in occupied Poland. Subsequently, on August 7, 1941, these laws were extended to include that portion of Eastern Poland which had originally been occupied by Soviet Russia and which was later invaded by the Germans.

According to these laws, any Polish citizen, or any stateless person residing in Poland, three of whose grandparents had been members of a Jewish religious community, was to be considered a Jew. The law also defined as a Jew any person only two of whose grandparents had been Jews if the said person had himself been, on or prior to September 1, 1939, a member of a Jewish communal organization or married to a Jew or Jewess. The law declared that the offspring of an "unlawful" relationship between a Jew and non-Jew born subsequent to May 31, 1940, was to be considered a Jew.

The decree of July 24, 1940, provided that all business establishments belonging wholly to Jews or in which Jews held a controlling interest, were to be considered as Jewish businesses.

CURTAILMENT OF FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT OF JEWS

On December 11, 1939, an ordinance was issued (V.B.L. G.G. p. 231) forbidding all Jews in the Government-General to change residence after January 1, 1940, without first obtaining permission from the German authorities. Stringent regulations required all Jews entering the Government-General to report to the proper police authorities. Curfew

laws were introduced barring Jews from leaving their homes, without proper permission from the authorities, between 9 P.M. and 5 A.M.

These regulations, whose purpose it was to confine the Jews to a restricted area so that they could be immediately located whenever necessary, were based on two decrees of the Governor General—the decree of September 13, 1940 (V.B.L. G.G. p. 288) and the decree of October 15, 1941 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 99). The former provided that it was lawful to limit, restrict and curtail freedom of movement, and that any person forced to leave his home by order of the authorities could be required to forfeit or abandon his property without compensation for any losses suffered or damages sustained thereby. The decree of September 13, 1940, became the basis for the introduction of Ghettos, since it stated that "Residential restrictions may be imposed generally or only for a limited group of persons," meaning, of course, that persons affected could be crowded into a specific or restricted area. The latter decree—October 15, 1941—made it a capital crime for a Jew to leave the designated area or residence. This law provided that any Jew leaving or attempting to leave his designated domicile without the consent of the proper authorities, and any person aiding, abetting and concealing a Jew escaping, would be punished by death.

The freedom of movement of Jews was further curtailed by a series of decrees depriving them of the right to travel in trains or buses. On January 26, 1940 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 10) Jews were barred from using the railways without the written consent of the Governor General, his deputies or district chiefs. Violation of this order was made punishable by an unlimited fine, an indeterminate prison sentence or both. It also set up "special courts" to try the "transgressors." In April 1940 a decree was issued forbidding Jews from travelling in inter-city buses (*Warschauer Zeitung*, No. 89, April 17, 1940). Another decree, issued on August 21, 1940, restricted the use of the street cars by setting apart special cars for Jews. Later, these special cars were abolished, thus barring Jews entirely from travelling in street cars.

On February 29, 1941, a new decree was issued (V.B.L. G.G. No. 14) dealing with the use of public conveyances by Jews in the Government-General. This decree, amending the law of January 26, 1940, permitted Jews to travel in railways and other means of conveyances, ferries excepted, only if they obtained permission from the proper authorities. The law required that the permit to travel clearly indicate the date and place of destination, that it be issued for lowest class travel only and that the holder be not permitted to travel on express trains.

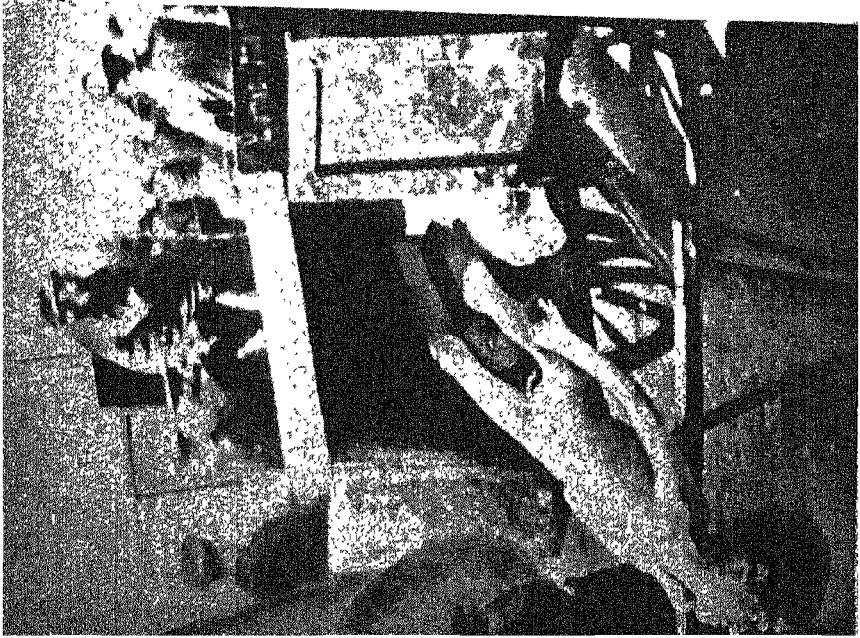
Not only were Jews deprived of the freedom of movement from



GHETTO VICTIMS OF STARVATION

Above Emaciated corpse of a man dead of starvation

Left: Corpses of starved Jews are loaded into wagons to be taken for burial.





REMOVING THE BODY OF A VICTIM OF STARVATION
FROM A WARSAW GHETTO SIDEWALK



NAKED CORPSES OF STARVATION VICTIMS

city to city but their movements within cities were also restricted. On September 27, 1940, the deputy to the military commander of the Warsaw region issued an ordinance which provided that Jews were not to use public buses other than those clearly marked "for Jews only," (*Gazeta Zydowska*, Sept. 27, 1940). On November 3, 1940, special "permits" were introduced for which a separate fee had to be paid and without which no Jew was permitted to travel in buses. Failure to present such "permit" was penalized by quadrupling the fare. On April 1, 1941, the deputy to the district commander of Krakow decreed that, beginning with April 3, 1941, Jews were to be barred from using public or private buses and taxis (*Krakauer Zeitung*, No. 75, April 2, 1941). Simultaneously the military commander of Lublin issued a decree introducing special conveyances for Jews (*Krakauer Zeitung*, No. 80, April 8, 1941).

It is evident from all the decrees, ordinances and regulations curtailing the freedom of movement of Jews that they were deliberately planned to facilitate the rounding-up of Jews for annihilation.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GHETTOS

The process of ejecting Jews from certain neighborhoods began even before the official establishment of Jewish Ghettos in cities.

On July 18, 1940, the deputy to the military commander of the Warsaw region issued a decree barring Jews from public parks and from using public benches outside the parks. The decree also excluded them from certain especially designated streets (*Gazeta Zydowska*, Aug. 3, 1940). On October 8, 1940, the same official issued a decree barring Jews, with the exception of Jewish workers who were led to and from work, from "Hitler Square" and "Victory Street" (*Gazeta Zydowska*, Oct. 14, 1940). Similar decrees were issued by the military governor of Krakow who forbade Jews to enter the so-called "Planty" or "parkway" streets and squares (*Der Stuermer*, No. 23, 1940).

It was only a step from ejecting Jews from the finer neighborhoods of the cities to thrusting them into special residential areas.

The Ghetto in Lodz was established even earlier by means of a local police ordinance on February 8, 1940. Here, too, the ordinance was preceded by an order dated November 9, 1939, barring Jews from the main streets of the city.

The Ghetto in Warsaw was introduced by an order of the military commander on October 16, 1940, following earlier attempts made in November, 1939. The "announcement" declaring the existence of a

Ghetto stated that the action was taken "to avert the danger of an epidemic." The notice delimiting the Ghetto area consisted of ten points and contained the following regulations: "Poles living within the designated Ghetto area were to vacate their premises on or before October 31, 1940: if they did so "voluntarily" they would have the privilege of selecting their own homes, otherwise they would be forcibly ejected; the selection of new homes for Jews would be attended to by the Jewish communal organization; all "Aryans" (here the notice did not use the word "Poles") living within the periphery of the Ghetto and all Jews living outside its confines were to give written notice to that effect within three days to the specially formed "Transfer Bureaus"; all voluntary exchanges of homes were to be reported forthwith; Poles were barred from moving into German-occupied residential sections: failure to comply with the regulations would be punishable, "as provided for in the decree of May 16, 1940" (this refers to an earlier Ghetto decree) by an indeterminate fine or prison sentence.

The fact that a later ordinance dealing with the Ghetto in Warsaw, and issued by the deputy to the military commander of the Warsaw district on January 14, 1941, relied for its legal basis on the decree issued by the Governor General on September 13, 1940, and on the law of December 11, 1939, curtailing the freedom of movement of Jews, indicated that the hidden intention of the latter was to pave the way for the introduction of Ghettos. Apart from delimiting the exact areas of the Ghetto, the ordinance of January 4, 1941, provided that (1) any person aiding and abetting Jews to violate the law; and (2) any person failing to inform on Jews who continued to live outside the pale of the Ghetto, would be subjected to punishment. It also provided that any violation by a Jew might result, in addition to the usual penalty, in a severe and lengthy "compulsory labor" sentence.

On February 22, 1941, the deputy to the military commander of the Warsaw district issued a novel decree aimed at condemning all Jews outside the confines of the Ghetto to starvation. It consisted of six provisions and made it unlawful for any person to sell or transfer property to, or to barter and exchange the same with Jews outside the Ghetto. By the terms of the decree both the purchaser and the vendor were made equally liable and both were made subject to fines and prison sentences. It also provided that minors between the ages of 14 and 21 found violating the law would be sentenced to compulsory labor. Moreover, it provided that parents and guardians of children under the age of 14 would be held responsible and would be punished for the acts of their wards (*Gazeta Żydowska*, Febr. 25, 1941).

There then followed a series of decrees, each of which in turn augmented the penalty for leaving the Ghetto, until October 15, 1941, when this "crime" was made punishable by death.

On April 19, 1941 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 35) a decree was issued establishing the office of "Commissar" over the Jewish quarters. The Commissar was to exercise his duties with the aid and assistance of the "Transfer Bureau" in supervising the economic relations between the Ghetto and the outside world and between the Ghetto and the Jewish communal organization. The Jewish communal organization, known as the "Jewish Council," was formed on the basis of a decree issued by the Governor General on November 28, 1939 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 9). The Jewish Council was charged with the responsibility of "receiving the orders from the German authorities" as well as with their enforcement. All Jews, men and women, were obligated to obey the regulations issued by the Jew Council in executing the laws, ordinances and decrees issued by the authorities. When the office of Commissar over the Warsaw Ghetto was established it was emphasized that the chairman of the Jewish Council, who was vested with some of the legal authority of the city's Mayor, would be subordinated to the authority of the Commissar and his decrees. Simultaneously with the actual appointment of a Commissar, May 13, 1941, a decree was issued transferring some of the functions of the Mayor to the chairman of the Jewish Council (*Gazeta Zydowska*, May 23, 1941).

The Ghetto in Lublin was established on March 24, 1941, by an order of the military commander of that region. In the *Krakauer Zeitung* of March 30, 1941, the explanation of "urgent public reasons" was given, abandoning the pretext of the danger of epidemics as used in the Warsaw ordinance. This decree itemized all the minutest details and plans that the establishment of a Ghetto might entail. The resettlement of the population was to be completed by April 10, 1941; all non-Jews within the Ghetto area were to move out and whoever failed to do this "voluntarily" was to be forcibly removed and permitted to take along possessions weighing no more than 62½ pounds; within 5 days thereafter, or by April 15, 1941, all Jews were to have been settled in the Ghetto. The decree also provided that all fixtures which could not be moved to the Ghetto must be offered to the *Treuband Aussenstelle* in Lublin, which had the sole authority to order such fixtures sold. The decree also contained a threat that all Jews failing to move into the Ghetto on or before April 15, 1941, would be deported—a sentence which became quite popular a year later—in which case they would be permitted to take along baggage not exceeding 62½ pounds. It expressly

forbade Jews to hide fellow Jews. The enactment and execution of the ordinance was vested in the authority of the Mayor of the city of Lublin. It was also provided that failure to comply with all the regulations would result in "prompt prosecution and punishment."

The order of March 3, 1941, which decreed the establishment of a Ghetto in the city of Krakow, declared that it was prompted by "police and sanitary reasons." Here the introduction of the Ghetto was tied up with a more far-reaching matter—the complete expulsion of all Jews ordered by Governor General Hans Frank in August 1940 on the ground that a city housing many Jews was not a fit place for the representatives of Hitler's Reich (*Krakauer Zeitung*, Aug. 18, 1941). Frank ordered that all Jews were to evacuate Krakow on or before August 18, 1940, and that any Jew remaining there without express permission would be sentenced to compulsory labor. Thereafter additional and harsher ordinances were issued, such as that issued by the military chief of the Krakow district on November 25, 1940, which expressly stated that its purpose was to "clear Krakow of all Jews excepting those who may still be needed for their skills." To attain this end, the order provided that no more Jews were to settle in Krakow and that only those Jews having a "special dispensation" for the purpose would be permitted to remain there; that all others would be expelled by the authorities (and not by "voluntary evacuation") so as to "preclude the possibility of their settling in undesirable regions"; that Jews who were being thus exiled would not be permitted to take along with them baggage in excess of 62½ pounds, and that the remaining Jewish property would have to be offered to the *Trenband Aussonstelle* for sale, that only with the consent of this authority could there be a free exchange and sale of property; that all property was subject to confiscation; that the decree was to be strictly obeyed and that any violation would be punished (*Warschauer Zeitung*, No. 283, Nov. 30, 1941).

In April 1941 a series of decrees appeared establishing Ghettos in many other cities of Poland; among them two Ghettos in Radom (*Krakauer Zeitung*, No. 79, April 6, 1941) and one in Kielce (*Krakauer Zeitung*, No. 80, April 8, 1941).

On October 28, 1942, a decree was issued establishing Ghettos in the Warsaw and Lublin districts (V.B.L. G.G. No. 94) followed by a decree of November 14 to the same effect in the districts of Radom, Krakow and Galicia. According to these decrees there were to be only 55 places in the entire Government-General in which Jews were permitted to live; among them 13 Ghettos. This law made it mandatory that all Jews—those who were considered Jews under the laws intro-

duced on July 24, 1940—settle on or before November 30 in one of the 55 designated areas. It also required all non-Jews to evacuate those regions within the specified time. These laws also provided that Jews failing to comply with the instructions would be liable for the death penalty. They also provided that any one housing, feeding or concealing a Jew who has left the Ghetto would be liable for the death penalty. The law provided further that failure to report a Jew outside the designated Ghetto area would be a crime, and that any person failing to report such a Jew to the police would be held accountable and taken "under police protection" (Par. 3); that non-Jews failing to evacuate the Jewish districts, or entering therein without permission by the police, would be punished by imprisonment for three months and by a fine of 1,000 zlotys. The laws provided that the various Jewish districts were to be supervised by Jewish Councils subject to the rules and regulations of the district Governors and various police authorities.

HUMILIATING DECREES

Many of the decrees merely sought to humiliate the Polish Jews and outrage their dignity.

On September 19, 1940, a law was issued (V.B.L. G.G. No. 57) forbidding the employment of non-Jewish women in Jewish homes or businesses. All labor contracts with respect to such employment were declared to be void within six weeks after the issuance of the decree.

Simultaneously with the previously mentioned order issued by the military commander of the Warsaw district on October 8, 1940, forbidding Jews to enter certain Warsaw streets, it was decreed that a Jew encountering a German in uniform "must visibly make room for him and, if necessary, get off the sidewalk." Violation of this regulation was punishable by a fine of 1,000 zlotys or by imprisonment of three months if the fine could not be paid (*Warschauer Zeitung*, Oct. 10, 1940).

On January 9, 1941, the Warsaw district commander ordered that no Jew was to greet a German in public (*Gazeta Żydowska*, May 9, 1941). The purpose of this order was to remove even the semblance of humane relationships between Jews and Germans.

OUTLAWING THE JEWISH RELIGION

Not only was the dignity of the Jews violated by decrees but their religious sentiments as well.

Among the very first decrees issued by the General Governor was one on October 26, 1939, forbidding the slaughter of animals in accordance with Jewish law. Cynically enough, this decree was based on the contention that no cruelty to animals could be tolerated in a region "under German sovereignty." Thus, under the guise of gentleness and compassion, a law was issued abolishing *shechitah* and punishing its violators with another bit of German-conceived humanitarianism—the concentration camp.

On January 26, 1940, a decree was issued forbidding Jewish public religious services in order to prevent the "menace of an epidemic"; this resembles the motive given for the introduction of the Warsaw Ghetto. The decree provided that all participants in public religious services would be punished (*Gazeta Zydowska*, Nov. 8, 1940).

In the city of Krakow, the local authorities issued a decree in October, 1940, directing all Jews to keep their stores and shops open on *Yom-Kippur* and other Jewish holidays (*Gazeta Zydowska*, Oct. 7, 1940).

LAW AND LEGAL PROCEDURE

An order issued by the German Ministerial Council for State Defense, dated December 16, 1941, concerning the procedure of criminal cases against Jews and Poles in the "incorporated Eastern territories" is an appalling example of legal discrimination which has the effect of simply placing Jews and Poles of the area outside the pale of law.

According to that order the following "crimes" are punishable by death: (1) violence committed against a German as a member of the German *Volkstum* (racial stock), a wide and very elastic concept which lends itself to almost unlimited interpretation; (2) any evidence of an anti-German state of mind especially if evidenced by anti-German remarks, or by pulling down or damaging posters put up by the German honor or the welfare of the German Reich or the German people—clearly a concept which may embrace any action; (3) acts directed against Nazi soldiers, policemen and party organs, etc., against institutions of the German authorities, and inciting disobedience of German orders; (4) approval of or readiness to connive at the above-mentioned acts or failure to report to the authorities knowledge of plans to perpetrate such acts; (5) unauthorized possession of arms or failure to report such unauthorized possession of arms.

There was a magnanimous provision that "crimes" 2 to 5 might, in cases "which are not grave," be punished by "only" imprisonment (without a time limit).

The effect of such legislation was that any Jew might be put to death for failure to report another Jew or a Pole who pulled down or damaged a German placard.

The order of December 16, 1941, contained further regulations which are unique in the history of legal discriminations. Thus Jews and Poles were to be punished for any act which is punishable "according to the basic idea or spirit of German penal law," or even "according to the needs of the state in the incorporated territories." No attempt was made to define or explain what is permissible and what is prohibited under such penal regulations, and no specific law was referred to. Under such "legislation" any Jew or any Pole could be imprisoned for an indefinite period or executed on any pretext.

A special clause directed that even in cases where capital punishment was not provided by law it must be applied (against a Jew or a Pole) if the act was due to "particularly low mentality" or was of a "particularly grave nature for other reasons"; in such cases (actually in any case, since any case may be interpreted by a judge as due to a "particularly low mentality" or otherwise of a "particularly grave nature") the death penalty might be applied even against "youthful culprits who committed grave crimes." That is, even children might be punished by death at the discretion of the judges.

The courts designated to try all cases of Jews and Poles were the *Sondergericht* (special Court) and the *Amtsrichter*. There was to be no appeal from any sentence by the defendant, but the prosecutor could appeal a decision he considered "mild."

The unparalleled violations of the most elementary human rights in criminal procedure are not exhausted by the above regulations. It was specifically decreed that Poles and Jews could not ask for the disqualification of a judge on the ground of personal bias against the defendant. A further decree made Poles and Jews inadmissible as witnesses in the German courts and deprived them of the right to appear as plaintiffs in criminal suits, and granted the prosecutor the unique privilege of departing from the prescribed procedure in presenting the case and in asking for a penalty, "where they consider it expedient for the speedy execution of the case."

Thus a Jew and a Pole could be punished for any act, in any way, at any time. All limitations adopted in civilized countries under any code of law for the protection of the defendant against the errors and whims of the judges did not exist for Jews and Poles in the "incorporated Eastern territories" of the Greater German Reich.

JEWISH PROPERTY

A series of ordinances placed Jewish property outside the law. The Jewish proprietor was deprived of his right to dispose of anything he possessed, and he was to a very large extent dispossessed.

On November 18, 1939, the *Reichsstatthalter* of the *Reichsgau Wartheland* (V.B.L. No. 2, 1940) and on November 20, 1939, the Chief of the Department of Finance of the Government-General (V.B.L. No. 7, 1939) initiated the process by ordering all Jewish bank accounts to be frozen. No Jew was permitted to possess more than 2,000 zlotys in cash nor be paid more than 500 zlotys in cash. The surplus was to be frozen in the bank, out of which he could take out up to 250 zlotys weekly.

The registration of Jewish property, as a further step in dispossessing the Jews, took place in several stages. A decree of December 18, 1939, called for the declaration by Jews of all jewelry exceeding 2,000 zlotys in value, before the middle of January, 1940. This was followed by the order of January 24, 1940 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 7) by which all Jewish property in the Government General was to be registered, including immovable property, movable property, as well as all claims, investments, rights and profits. Jewish property was defined as: (1) Everything belonging to Jews who on January 1, 1939, were Polish citizens or who became Polish citizens after that date; (2) the property of companies in which more than half of the partners were Jews; (3) the property of limited companies in which 25% of the capital belonged to the Jews on January 1, 1939; (4) the property of limited companies which had Jews in their management on January 1, 1939, or later or "which in any other way were subject to Jewish influence." Failure to report Jewish property entailed confiscation, besides penalties by fine and imprisonment (without limitation).

On March 1, 1940, further ordinances were issued (No. 6 and 7) restricting the Jews in the disposition of their postal savings accounts and forbidding them to buy gold or other precious metals without a license from the authorities (V.B.L. G.G. No. 16). On September 30, 1941, this was extended to a general prohibition on the sale of gold to Jews.

The confiscation of Jewish property, after the registration was completed, was carried out by the order of September 17, 1940. The Jews in the territories incorporated in the Reich were deprived of their movable and immovable property, except for their clothes and their

bank accounts up to 1,000 marks (\$400) (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, p. 1270, 1940).

On November 18, 1940, an order was issued which put an end to the activities of Jewish credit cooperatives (*Krakauer Zeitung*, Nov. 21, 1940). It was made clear at the time that Jewish cooperatives were defined as not only those which were affiliated with Jewish federations but all those which had Jews in their management, or in which more than a quarter of the participants were Jews. The cooperatives had to supply evidence to prove that they had registered their property according to the decree of January 24, 1940. A German law of general character dated September 17, 1940 regarding the incorporated territories provided for registration of property.

A large part of Jewish property was practically confiscated by the *Treubandstelle* set up by the ordinance of November 15, 1939, which placed the most important Jewish enterprises and real estate at the disposal of Commissariat managements.

FORCED LABOR

With regard to forced labor, the deprivation of rights from the Jews was especially aggravated. On October 26, 1939, there appeared two ordinances concerning forced labor: one for Poles (*Arbeitspflicht*), the other for Jews (*Zwangsarbeit*). The ordinance for Jews (No 1 of the *Verordnungsblatt*) was more severe and contained more stringent regulations. It established in a general way that all Jews in the Government-General were subject to forced labor, and to that end, they would be taken into special labor battalions. The chief of the Gestapo was authorized to supplement or carry out the matter in detail.

On December 12, 1939, the chief of the Gestapo of the Government-General issued a supplementary ordinance concerning forced labor for Jews. According to paragraph 1, Jews from 14 to 60 years of age were subject to forced labor for two years, but the term could be extended "if the educational purposes of forced labor have not been accomplished." What those "educational purposes" were was not stated. Paragraph 3 of the ordinance deals with the duty of Jews from 12 to 60 years old to register for work; they were all required to register with the local Jewish community. Further clauses ordered Jews designated for forced labor to bring with them food for two days, and two clean blankets. They were not allowed to give away or sell their own work tools. A penalty of ten years' imprisonment was announced for Jews failing to register or seeking to avoid forced labor, for failing to

bring along working tools or attempting to give them away. Members of a Jewish Community Council who failed to carry out the provisions of the ordinance relating to registration or who helped anyone to avoid forced labor were subject to the same penalty. Also individuals receiving the work tools of people conscripted for forced labor were subject to ten years' imprisonment and to confiscation of their property, if they were Jews. The *Sondergerichte* were designated as the courts with authority to issue such sentences.

A further supplementary ordinance, dated December 15, 1941 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 3, 1941-42) limited the remuneration of the Jews only to work actually done. Legal provisions for the protection of women and children at work were declared inapplicable to Jews.

An order of December 21, 1940, deprived the Jews of labor cards (V.B.L. G.G. No. 79). Special working certificates for Jews in the labor camps were prescribed by the order of the District Transfer Office in Warsaw of March 17, 1941.

In Krakow the city commandant issued an order on January 7, 1941, requiring that all Jews over sixteen years of age work at clearing the snow. Similar local orders forcing Jews to do special work were issued in other municipalities as well.

PROFESSIONS AND OCCUPATIONS

A general census of occupations according to race was introduced with the order of October 3, 1941 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 92). Before that order was issued Jewish physicians had already been barred (by the order of March 6, 1940) from treating "Aryan" patients, and "Aryan" physicians had been barred from treating Jews. A regulation of June 1941 excluded Jews from all Boards of Health. Jewish physicians who had received permission to live outside of the Ghettos (in Warsaw, Krakow, etc.) were compelled to display a Shield of David 10 centimeters in size on their signs.

Some professions, lawyers for example, were declared open only to holders of special permits—which were not granted to Jews.

Other occupations were expressly forbidden to Jews.

Restrictions on Jewish craftsmen were for the most part carried out by local ordinances (e.g. in Lublin it was forbidden to give leather to Jewish shoemakers). A registration of all "Aryan" artisans in Warsaw was ordered on March 20, 1940, only the registered "Aryan" artisans being accorded the full rights of their occupations.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT, ETC.

Although there was hardly any need for special legislation to exclude the Jews from any protection under the Nazi occupation, there was a series of ordinances making the matter quite explicit.

The ordinance of December 16, 1939 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 13) excluded the Jews from all unemployment benefits.

The ordinance "*wegen Arbeitslosenhilfe in den eingegliederten Gebieten*" of March 29, 1940 (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, part 1, No. 58) which regulated the matter with regard to the incorporated territories, expressly made clear that Jews were not to derive any benefits. The same was made clear by the ordinance of November 9, 1940 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 64).

Nazi legislation on other occasions made it clear that Jews were deprived of their rights in Polish insurance institutions (sick benefit disability). The ordinance of December 20, 1939 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 1 of 1940) deprived them of their rights to receive military pensions.

The Nazi law consistently and systematically divested the Jews of all rights as citizens. Acting on the principle established by Frank and expressed in his motto quoted at the head of this chapter Nazi legislation sought not merely to serve the needs of the German occupying authorities, but to destroy the peaceful Jewish community in Poland whose history goes back a thousand years, and to exterminate three and a half million industrious and productive people.

That crime awaits its trial at the bar of world history.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND THE JEWISH RELIGION

THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN POLAND UP TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR

THE Jewish population in Poland was organized into *Kebillas* (Communities). The immovable possessions of the Jewish Community, such as synagogues, cemeteries, hospitals, etc., were owned by the *Kebillas*.

According to the decree of the President of the Polish Republic of October 14, 1927, which unified the thereto differing laws and decrees of the various Polish regions concerning the Jewish Communities, all Jews in Poland were to be organized into a single religious Federation of a public-legal character.

The decree placed at the head of the Federation a "Religious Council" which was to be composed of 34 laymen and 17 rabbis. However, the council never was created.

The decree established the local religious Jewish Communities as an integral part of the Federation to which all Jews, inhabitants of the individual administrative districts, were obliged to belong. The local Jewish communities were also public-legal institutions.

The *Kebillas* were administered by an Executive Board of 8 members (in towns of less than 5,000 Jewish inhabitants), or by a Council and Executive Board in larger towns. The Rabbi of the Community was officially a member of the Executive Board.

Voting for the Executive Boards and the Councils were universal, equal, secret, direct and proportional. Elections took place every four years. Male Jews above the age of 25 years were entitled to vote; candidates for office had to be over 30 years of age. (The specified ordinance was decreed by the Minister of Education and Religion on October 24, 1930.)

The decree of October 14, 1927, imposed the following tasks on the *Kehillas*: the maintenance of the Rabbinate (each Community was to have one Rabbi and at least one assistant); the maintenance of synagogues, ritual baths (*mikvot*) and cemeteries; the religious education of the youth; providing the Jewish population with kosher meat; the administration of Community properties and endowments, and finally the establishment and maintenance of charitable institutions.

'The *Kehillas* had the right to impose taxes on the Jews in order to obtain the necessary funds to carry out their tasks.' The source of income was direct taxes in addition to the general state and municipal taxes, fees for ritual slaughter and cemetery fees. In the collecting of the taxes, the Communities were assisted by state authorities. The financial affairs of the *Kehilla* were regulated according to Government ordinances, and the Community budgets had to be approved by the Government as the supervising authority.

The *Kehilla*, in common with all other legally recognized religious bodies in Poland, was exempt from the various taxes such as taxes on immovable property, income tax, gross business tax, etc.

The immovable possessions of the Jewish Community—synagogues, hospitals, ritual baths and cemeteries—represented an enormous value. Ever since the 14th century the Jewish *Kehillas* had kept a documented record of their immovable properties, which naturally increased in quantity and value through the years.

The synagogues in Poland, apart from their religious significance for the Jewish population, had a great cultural and historical value because of their antiquity and because of their often rich interior furnishings. Up to the outbreak of the present World War the oldest synagogue in Poland was the one in Krakow, which dated from the 14th century. Among the 16th century synagogues were the ones in Lublin (*Maharsbal Shul* and *Maharam Shul*); in Lwow (*Tunei Zaban Shul*), Przemysl, Jaworow, Rzeszow, Krakow, Przeworsk, Lancut, Zamosc, Szczepieszyn, Sandomierz, Dubno and Wilno (rebuilt in 1593). Synagogues built in the 17th century were to be found in Grodno, Luck, Lwow, Wronki, Krakow, Leszno, Chelm, etc. The new, modern temples and synagogues built in the 19th and 20th centuries were notable for their beauty and richness (the Tlomackie Synagogue in Warsaw, two very large synagogues in Lodz, the temples in Krakow, Lwow, the synagogue in Tarnow, etc.)

A number of *Kehillas* possessed valuable libraries. The library of the synagogue on Tlomackie Street in Warsaw amounted in 1928 to 24,860 volumes, among them a large number of incunabula. Up to the

outbreak of the present war the library had practically doubled to about 50,000 volumes. The so-called Straszun Library in Wilno had approximately 25,000 volumes and many manuscripts. There was a large *Kebilla* library in Lwow.

THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES UNDER NAZI RULE

On November 28, 1939, Governor-General Frank promulgated an order which fundamentally changed the structure of the Jewish *Kebillas*. The order required that in each municipality there be established a representative body for the Jews under the name of *Judenrat* (Jewish Council). In smaller municipalities with a Jewish population not exceeding 10,000 the *Judenrat* was to consist of 12 members; in the larger cities, of 24 members. The task of the *Judenrat* was succinctly stated: "The *Judenrat* is required to carry out, through its president or vice-president, the demands of the German authorities. It will be responsible for their strict fulfillment to the smallest detail. The orders which it issues for the purpose of fulfilling German demands must be obeyed by all Jewish men and women." (Paragraph 5.)

From that time on the Occupation authorities used the Jewish communities to carry out its demands in regard to the Jewish population. By the third year of the occupation the Jewish Councils and their officers were driven to desperation, as is tragically evidenced by the suicide of the president of the Warsaw *Judenrat*, Adam Czerniakow, on July 23, 1942, who could not bring himself to carry out the German demand to produce a contingent of Warsaw Jews for deportation and slaughter. The same thing happened in a number of other communities.

But even before this stage was reached the Jewish *Kebillas* were compelled to suffer a series of terrible hardships. They were forced to be the agents for carrying out the most brutal persecutions on the Jewish population. The members of the *Judenrat* suffered the most frightful humiliations and often forfeited their liberty and even their lives for failing to carry out orders which were impossible of fulfillment or even merely on the slightest suspicion on the part of the Germans.

In connection with the disorders, which were mostly precipitated by the Nazis themselves but for which the Jews were held responsible, the German authorities, in the early days of the occupation, demanded money contributions from the *Kebillas*. Thus, in November 1939, when a Polish police officer was shot in a house in the Jewish section, the Germans demanded and collected from the *Kebilla* the sum of 300,000 zlotys, not to speak of the mass-murder of the Jews in the

house where the shooting took place. In Wloclawek the Jewish community was compelled to pay a fine of 600,000 zlotys after the local synagogue was burned—the fire was obviously started by the Nazis—“as punishment for destroying a public building.” In Lublin fines of 200,000 zlotys were imposed twice. In Zgierz the *Kehilla* had to pay 100,000 zlotys. The same practice of demanding money contributions from the *Kehillas* was applied by the Nazis in the summer of 1941 when they seized the Polish territory previously occupied by Soviet Russia. In July 1941 they demanded of the Lwow community 20,000,000 rubles, and when it became apparent that it was impossible to collect such a sum the Nazis seized 500 prominent Jews of the city and deported them to an unknown destination.

The Nazis sought to obtain Jews for forced labor through the *Kehillas*. According to the regulations issued by the Gestapo-chief of the Government-General on December 12, 1939, the *Kehillas* were required to carry out the registration of all Jews between the ages of 12 and 60 years, and special punishment was decreed for members of the *Judenrat* for failing to complete the registration at the specified time or for helping anybody to avoid forced labor in whole or in part. An order of the Gestapo chief of January 20, 1940, under the heading “Order on the *Judenrat* for the Draft and Organization of Jews for Forced Labor,” recited in detail the functions the *Kehillas* were required to perform, apart from the registration, in seizing Jews for forced labor. They were required to provide the necessary working tools in cases where the seized laborers did not have their own. They were made responsible for reporting to the authorities as to the possessions of those Jews who escaped from the labor battalions.

In practice, the forced labor squads which the Nazis demanded had to be provided by the *Kehillas*.

Even in relation to demands which violated the deepest religious convictions of the Jews, the Nazis required that the *Kehillas* convey the orders. When, for instance, the occupation authorities decided that the Jews in Krakow were to work on the second day of *Rosh Hashona* and on *Yom Kippur* in 1940, the *Judenrat* was forced to approve the order in the form of a notice which was published on the first day of *Rosh Hashona*, October 3, 1940 (*Gazeta Zydowska*, October 7, 1940).

The Jewish communities, subjected to such moral degradation, were also deprived of all rights of a financial nature which they had enjoyed under Polish law. According to an ordinance of November 23, 1939 (V.B.L. G.G. No. 8) all taxation privileges of the *Kehillas* were annulled.

But regardless of the fact that the *Kebillas* were compelled to become an instrument in the Nazi policy of exterminating the Jews, and the members of their committees threatened with the most drastic punishment, their behavior constitutes one of the noble pages in the history of the Jewish martyrology. For the persecuted Jews the *Kebillas* were the only wall on which they could lean. During the years of 1940, 1941 and 1942 the members of the Jewish Councils accomplished wonders in ameliorating the terrible distress of the Jewish population, risking their lives countless times in defense of the interests of the Jews in the Ghettos. Many of them died the heroic death of martyrs, for the Nazis unleashed their unrestrained fury against them when their planned extermination encountered any obstacle.

As an example of the amazing work of organizing which was accomplished by the *Kebillas* in the Ghettos, may be taken the Warsaw *Kehilla* concerning which we have detailed information in the *Gazeta Żydowska*. Under the Nazi occupation it was organized into the following departments: (1) General Section consisting of a secretariat and divisions for personnel, discipline, legacies and archives; (2) Statistics; (3) Economics; (4) Budget; (5) Taxation and Revenue; (6) Hospitals; (7) Labor Battalion, with payroll, labor exemption, special personnel, transportation and labor camp divisions; (8) Health and Social Welfare; (9) Sanitation; (10) Cemetery; (11) Registration, with sections for general Jewish population, registration for forced labor, identification card system and address bureau; (12) Vital Statistics; (13) Auditing; (14) Vocational Training; (15) Education; (16) Police; (17) Postal Service; (18) Trade and Industry; (19) Housing; (20) Real Property; (21) Law; (22) Religious Affairs; (23) Office of Supply.

The activities of the Jewish *Kehilla*, as reflected in the above organization, were of astonishing variety and show that the *Kehilla* concerned itself with every aspect of the life of the Jews. It transformed itself into a sort of prison administration of millions of Polish Jews who had been locked behind Ghetto walls. It organized its own police force to maintain order in the Ghetto. It distributed the mail which arrived from the outside world for the Ghetto inhabitants. It managed the houses which had been taken away from their previous tenants. The *Kehilla* controlled the food supply for the Jews. It supported the hospitals and cared for the health of the patients to the limits of its possibilities. It supervised the trade, handicraft and industry of the Jews. It set up House Committees which supervised the individual dwellings. It collected money from various sources in order to carry out its extraordinary tasks. It

imposed various taxes, as for instance on food cards, or on occasion a head-tax, etc., besides the previous community taxes.

The budget of the Warsaw *Kehilla* in the first half of 1940 amounted to 4,295,000 zlotys. The preliminary budget of the Warsaw *Kehilla* for a half-year period in 1941 amounted to 17,000,000 zlotys of income and more than 24,500,000 zlotys of expenditures. So great were the requirements of the population which the *Kehilla* had to provide that it was necessary to cover the deficit by means of various loans.

In the fulfilment of such tasks the members of the Jewish Councils constantly risked their freedom and their lives. In the very first period of the occupation, for instance, all the members of the *Judenrat* in Lodz, the second largest Jewish community in Poland, were sent to a concentration camp in Radogoszcz, a suburb of Lodz, and from there to an unknown destination, after which nothing was heard from them. The only one to remain was "the oldest of the Jews," the president of the *Kehilla*. In Lwow the president of the *Judenrat*, Dr. Landsberg, together with a number of members of the *Kehilla*, were publicly hanged for some undisclosed "crime," and the bodies were left hanging for several days. A large number of members of the *Judenrat* committed suicide in the second half of 1942 when the Nazi authorities began their brutal mass-murders of the Jewish population and demanded that the *Kehilla* provide lists of Jews for deportation, which meant certain death (e.g. Dr. Horowitz, the chairman of the Kolomyja *Judenrat*). Among these was the president of the Warsaw *Kehilla*, Adam Czerniakow, of whom mention has already been made. But this by no means completes the martyrology of the Warsaw *Kehilla*. Four members of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw were executed in April 1943 during the heroic resistance of the remnants of the Warsaw Jews against the bestial massacres. These were Stolzman, Dr. Gustaw Wielikowski, Marek Lichtenbaum and Stanislaw Szereszewski.

THE BAN ON RITUAL SLAUGHTER AND THE PERSECUTION OF THE JEWISH RELIGION

One of the first acts of the Nazi authorities after the occupation in Poland was the prohibition of ritual slaughter (V.B.L. G.G. No. 1 for 1939). This was a severe blow for the Jewish population the majority of which adhered to its religious dietary customs. For illegal ritual slaughter the punishment was in practice even much severer than that provided in the ordinance; for example, instead of imprisonment the

death sentence was imposed on the Lublin butcher, Silverman, for selling kosher meat in the Ghetto (*Lemberger Zeitung*, February 1942).

Hundreds of Jewish synagogues were burned by the Nazis immediately after they marched into Poland. The Nazi press published terse accounts of these outrages. As an example may be taken the report published in the *Krakauer Zeitung* of November 22, 1939, concerning the town of Tomaszow: "Some nights ago a Jewish synagogue and prayer-house which the Jews had established in a building in the city were burned down. The Fire Department prevented the spread of the flames to the neighboring buildings." Many similar reports are to be found regarding a number of other towns; for instance concerning the burning of two large synagogues in Lodz on Kosciuszko Avenue and on Wolborska Street on November 12, 1939, the day following the destruction of the Kosciuszko Memorial on Freedom Place in which Jews were compelled to take part. Following this the two large synagogues and a number of small synagogues were burned and it was announced that the Poles had set fire to the buildings in revenge for the destruction by the Jews of the Kosciuszko Memorial. Even more cynical was the procedure of the Nazis in Wloclawek where a heavy fine was imposed on the *Kehilla* after the large synagogue was burned, on the ground that the Jews themselves had set fire to it. In Poznan several synagogues were destroyed and one converted into a swimming-pool for the soldiers. Synagogues were also destroyed in Czestochowa, Zamosc, Sosnowiec, Grudziadz, Bielsko, Katowice, Torun, Sanok, Jaroslaw, Sandomierz, Bydgoszcz, Grojec and other towns.

A number of synagogues were put to the most sacrilegious uses. The *Krakauer Zeitung* of March 7, 1941, published an account of the synagogue in Przemyśl which was used as an electrical plant. In Nowy Tomysl (Silesia) the Nazis turned the synagogue into a saloon. In Makow the synagogue was converted into a stable, as happened in Gora-Kalwarja to the prayer-house of the famous *Tzaddik* of the town, and in Gniewoszow near Radom. In Ciechanow the synagogue was defiled by turning it into a public latrine.

In many towns the *Sepher Torahs* (scrolls of the law) were defiled in the most shameful manner. On *Rosh Hashona*, 1939, in Plonsk, near Warsaw, the Nazis made the Jews assemble in the town square and compelled them to set fire to the *Sepher Torahs* and other holy books. The Nazi officer who had issued the order, fired his revolver into the heap before the flame was applied, shouting: "I have shot the Jewish God!" In Halicz, Piotrkow Trybunalski, Zdunska Wola and other towns the Nazis unrolled the *Sepher Torahs* on the streets and trampled

on them. Rabbi Moshe Menachem Segal of Lodz was compelled to tear up the *Sepher Torabs* in a synagogue. There were many cases of unexampled heroism: in Krasnik, near Lublin, a Jewish butcher who was ordered to defile the holy books, bared his breast and shouted to the Nazi soldiers: "I would rather you shot me in the heart!" He was immediately shot and fell dead.

In several towns the Nazis herded the Jews into the synagogues and set the buildings on fire, burning the Jews alive. Fearful atrocities took place in Mlawa, where the Jews, on order of the Nazis, were compelled to assemble in the synagogue. In the midst of their prayers the Nazis rushed in, defiled the *Sepher Torabs* and other sacred objects, shouting at the weeping Jews: "We are fighting against you and against your God! Death to all of you! Let your God show whether he can help you!"

In comparison with such brutality against the Jewish religion the ban against public worship seems "harmless." That ban was imposed on January 26, 1940, under the excuse of the danger of spreading epidemics.

The rabbis were subjected to the most unrestrained abuses. Rabbi Silberstein, a member of the Warsaw Rabbinate, was compelled to leave his pulpit in the middle of the religious services and dance on the streets in his rabbinical vestments. Rabbi Moses Menachem Segal, a member of the Lodz Rabbinate, was led through the streets, wearing his phylacteries, and was murderously flogged. Large numbers of rabbis were put to death during the Nazi occupation. In Wegrow, near Siedlce, Rabbi Mendel Morgenstern was publicly killed after the most excruciating tortures. Shmelke Kornitzer, the head of the Krakow Rabbinate, was shot. Tobias Horowitz, the rabbi of Sanok, was killed together with his entire family and his two brothers-in-law, the rabbis Shapiro. The rabbi of Podwoloczyska, Leib Babad, was burned alive. Itzhok Nachum Twersky, the rabbi of Rawa Ruska and his brother-in-law, Rabbi Pinchas Twersky, were murdered. According to the report of a witness a number of rabbis were murdered in Eastern Galicia, in Stanislawow, Nadworna and Delatyn. A large number of rabbis were tortured to death in the concentration camp at Oswiecim and their ashes sent to their families.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE JEWISH UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT IN POLAND

IN SPITE of the Nazi ban on Jewish public, communal, cultural and social activities, they were never completely discontinued, and various underground methods were tried for continuing them, in addition to the ones officially permitted to the Jewish Communities and Self-help organizations.

The Jewish underground movement *did not confine itself to purely Jewish matters*; a large part of it was devoted to the active and the passive struggle, together with the Poles, against the occupying forces. Jews took part in guerilla warfare from the first day of the occupation and Jewish partisans maintained close contact with the Polish movement for liberation. That contact was not discontinued, even, in the most difficult days of segregation in the Ghettos, and later in the tragic days of extermination.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE MOVEMENT

A report by the Yiddish Scientific Institute of New York, published on March 10, 1942, states that "In Nazi Poland the Jewish underground movement is active in nearly sixty towns and cities." The report, based on information received from Poland, says that the work is "conducted with a self-sacrifice difficult to imagine" and that "the entire underground work in the Government-General is united into a central body."

After the outbreak of the Russo-German war and the occupation by the German forces of the territories previously occupied by the Soviet Army, the Jewish underground movement established contact with the Polish underground groups in those localities.

In the organization of the active resistance against the Nazi occupants a prominent role was played by Jewish labor groups such as the Jewish Workers Party (Bund), the Zionist Labor Party (Poale Zion), right and left wings, the Zionist pioneer units and orthodox youth groups.

The Jewish labor parties, which are the moving spirit of the underground activities, maintained close contact with the Polish underground movement and carried on a coordinated activity. The participation of the Jews in the general Polish underground movement is quite considerable, regardless of the fact that the position of the Jews, locked up as they are in the Ghetto, was incomparably worse than that of their Polish comrades.

ILLEGAL PUBLICATIONS

The Jewish underground movement made it one of its main objectives to publish illegal newspapers and bulletins to spread the news of what was going on in the outside world.

The Nazi ban on all the free publications in the Yiddish language made the illegal publications the only important source of information. According to the Bulletin of the Polish Information Center (New York, June 16, 1942) there were about 150 illegal newspapers appearing in Poland of which a great many appeared daily and one twice a day. Among these there were 8 periodicals regularly published by the Jewish underground movement. The publications were distributed in the Ghetto and among the Polish population by a special brigade of underground messengers. Among those publications were a weekly information bulletin with foreign news taken from foreign radio broadcasts; a monthly magazine for Jews with articles on various problems of Poland and the world; a special monthly magazine in Polish devoted to Jewish-Polish relations; two magazines—one in Yiddish and one in Polish—published by the Youth Organization *Zukunft* (Future), a branch of the Jewish Workers' Party (Bund).

The Poale-Zion Labor Parties and their youth organizations published several illegal newspapers. For a time even a daily newspaper was reported to have been published in the Warsaw Ghetto.

The documentary evidence gathered by the American Representation of the Poale-Zion contains information of a Yiddish-Hebrew underground publication entitled *Deror-Freiheit* (Freedom), which made its first appearance early in 1940. The Poale-Zion also published an illegal brochure, *Suffering and Heroism in Jewish History*, designed to inspire the Jewish population with courage and endurance in the fight against the Nazis. It also published a special monthly magazine and mimeographed circulars containing world news and information about Palestine.

The Nazi authorities waged a merciless fight on the Jewish underground press. A Jewish Telegraphic Agency dispatch from London

dated March 13, 1943, reports that in the notorious concentration camp at Oswiecim over 100 Jewish intellectuals were shot for issuing a secret anti-Nazi newspaper.

The Jewish underground movement was compelled to fight against the anti-Semitic agitation of some groups who were encouraged by the Nazis, especially in the first period of occupation and during the outbreak of the Russo-German war.

The Polish radical fascist party, the O.N.R. (*Oboz Narodowo Radykalny*) continued its anti-Semitic policy with the hearty approval of the Nazis. Since the beginning of the occupation, all Polish parties, except the National-Radical Party, went underground.

One of the tasks of the Jewish underground was to counteract the influence of the anti-Semitic propaganda stirred by the Nazis. With this aim in view it issued various publications in the Polish language. The Jewish Labor Party (Bund) published a magazine with a large circulation among the Polish workers and intelligentsia. The Jews also actively participated in all the underground publications of the democratic and socialist groups, combatting anti-Semitism and calling upon the people not to be misled by the racial theories.

The fight against anti-Semitism was pressed at all underground gatherings. In the Polish "Freedom Manifesto" which was adopted at a conference of the combined democratic underground organizations soon after the occupation in November 1939, among other resolutions was one demanding "political, economic, and cultural equality for all" and declaring that "race doctrines and anti-Semitism must be eliminated from Polish public life." The same manifesto also proclaims "the guarantee of freedom of conscience and religion" and states that "all citizens of the new Poland must be guaranteed the right to work and the protection of work and health."

At an underground meeting held later, with delegates representing two thousand groups of organized workers, peasants and intellectuals, a "Manifesto to the World" was issued containing resolutions similar to those in the "Manifesto of Freedom."

A further step was taken by the Polish democratic underground in the creation of an organization with the sole purpose of combating anti-Semitism. *Poland Fights* (N. Y., June 20th, 1941) tells of a League to Fight Anti-Semitism founded in East Poland by "prominent Polish intellectuals."

The mass deportations and murders in Poland which began in the second half of 1942 were met with a proclamation of vigorous protest. The Polish Government-in-Exile in London quotes extracts from a

"Manifesto by the Polish Underground Protesting Against Mass Murders of Jews:" "As Poles and Catholics we cannot be silent about the Nazi mass murders. . . . We cannot help, but we must violently protest. We send our protest to the entire world as Poles and as Christians."

The Nazis are well aware of the close cooperation between the Polish and the Jewish underground movements, which are a veritable thorn in the Hitlerites' sides. In a 1941 issue of the periodical *The German Police (Deutsche Polizei)*, Nazi Police Chief Ernst Streckenbacher confirms officially that the Polish and Jewish socialist organizations conduct their affairs in common, that they agitate the Polish masses and the Russians to resist the occupation authorities, and he concludes that these enemies of the Third Reich are more dangerous than the bandits.

EDUCATION

The underground movement was faced with the difficult and responsible task of organizing at least a minimum of schooling in view of the fact that the Nazis closed all Jewish schools and all religious educational institutions.

The underground also undertook the salvaging of Jewish cultural treasures from Nazi destruction, looting and "legal" confiscation. All sections were called on to participate in the work.

In Lodz, the second largest city in Poland, the Left Poale-Zion youth packed up all their books and red banners into boxes and put them away in a hidden vault underground. All parties and organizations took careful precautions in order that their archives should not fall into the hands of the enemy. Valuable books and documents were buried or otherwise hidden in places of safety.

There were "children's corners," a substitute for the school. Educated persons would go from town to town to organize teachers' courses, teaching orally, without textbooks. The general slogan was: "Every one to become a teacher, the older to teach the younger."

A cable from Zurich dated April 13, 1942, communicates from "trustworthy sources" a report of the underground educational activities among Polish Jews. Many textbooks are in manuscript. Classes consist of 5 to 6 children who meet in different places and are taught by itinerant teachers. Somewhere in Poland, in a summer resort, an underground teachers' seminary was founded with 40 students attending; upon graduation they were to become travelling teachers. Itinerant rabbis taught them the prayers and ritual ceremonies and each child was taught to recite the prayers.

Meetings were called from time to time attended by workers and intelligentsia. The day after the Jews were locked up in the Ghetto in Lodz, the Left Poale-Zion Party organized a May-day demonstration with anti-Hitler placards, which was dispersed by the Ghetto police.

On Sabbaths and holidays, Jewish New Year (*Rosh-Hashonah*) and *Yom-Kippur* (Day of Atonement) there were underground prayer meetings. In Warsaw, on *Rosh-Hashonah*, 1940, the Gestapo discovered such a prayer meeting being held among the ruins of a bombarded house, and arrested most of the congregation.

After the Jews were confined in the Ghettos, the Jewish underground attempted to organize the bringing of food inside the Ghetto walls. In this they were partly successful thanks to their contact with and the cooperation of the Polish underground. With the assistance of friendly Poles in town and country, they managed to smuggle in some food undiscovered by the Nazi guards.

SABOTAGE AND GUERILLA WARFARE

First and most important in the underground is sabotage and guerilla warfare. In these activities there is close collaboration between the Polish and the Jewish movement and every act is planned and executed in common, or mutually complemented. The work is carried on under the most difficult and dangerous conditions, and thousands have already paid for it with their lives.

The Nazi authorities are devoting a great deal of effort to stamping out underground sabotage activities. They have a list of the main participants in such activities, in which many Poles and Jews are singled out as guilty of sabotage. Official Polish sources report that of 20,000 names entered in the German roster over 2,000 are Jews.

Sabotage in Poland began immediately after the country was occupied and continued with growing strength. The reports emanating from Poland on the activities of the guerillas and saboteurs deal mostly with the second half of 1941. The acts of sabotage increased to such an extent that the German authorities adopted drastic measures to combat it.

Thus, on December 16, 1941, a law was promulgated authorizing the imposition of the death penalty on any Jew or Pole guilty of the slightest attempt at sabotage, such as pulling down or damaging an announcement by the German authorities.

We learn from various sources of Jewish participation in acts of sabotage. In June 1942, the *Svenska Dagbladet* reported the arrest in Krakow of 6 Jews who secretly printed Polish patriotic songs.

Official Polish sources reported that 150 Jews had been shot by the Nazis for sabotage of a train near Krakow in June.

In Radomsko, near Czestochowa, a fire was set to a furniture factory working for the German war industry; 200 Polish and 20 Jewish workers of the factory were sent to a concentration camp.

The Nazis in Poland felt the effect of the sabotage. Arthur Greis, the Gauleiter of the Warthegau (the area incorporated into the Reich), in an address before a convention of German merchants and industrialists in Torun, devoted most of his remarks to the growing sabotage, stating that the acts were undoubtedly inspired and conducted by Jews.

Das Schwarze Corps, the organ of the S.S. troops, states that Jewish artisans in the Ghetto who are compelled to work for the German war industry, sabotage their work and fail to supply the prescribed quantity of finished material.

Unable to cope with the frequent acts of sabotage which became especially dangerous for the Wehrmacht during the offensive in Russia in the summer of 1942, the Gestapo conceived the idea of forcing the entire local population to keep watch over the railway lines. This was reported in a Jewish Telegraphic Agency cable from Stockholm of June 19, 1942. Punishment is meted out on the whole population of the district for the slightest damage.

The Jewish anti-fascist committee in Kuibyshev, in its cable of March 20, 1943, tells of a guerilla leader, a Warsaw youth named Zeev, who carries on guerilla warfare against the Nazis in Eastern Poland. The group led by Zeev managed to disrupt railway communication between Brzesc and Minsk and between Brzesc and Homel for 18 days. The same guerilla band shot to death the Nazi Major-General Jacoby, who formed a new military division in Wilejka near Wilno. The Nazi authorities offered a large reward for the apprehension of Zeev, but he escaped capture.

A communique by the Polish Government-in-Exile in London tells of a Jewish guerilla band active in the Kielce province where it hides in the mountains and in caves. The band is led by a Jewish poetess, Malka Epstein, who has already become a legendary heroine of popular tales.

THE ARMED STRUGGLE OF THE JEWISH UNDERGROUND

The heroic resistance of the Jewish underground movement in Poland reached its climax during the first half of 1943, when the Jews took up arms in an open fight against the German barbarians.

The call of the Jewish underground movement for armed resistance came as an answer to the decision of Governor-General Hans Frank to liquidate the remaining Jews of the Polish Ghettos. Preparations for armed resistance and the task of supplying the Jewish population with machine-guns, hand grenades and explosives took place in great secrecy and with superlative organization.

The German Gestapo did not expect that it would have to pay a heavy price for its decision to liquidate the Ghetto. The first armed struggle on the streets of the Warsaw Ghetto took place on February 7, 1943, and there were many Germans among the hundreds of casualties. (*The Ghetto Speaks*, May 1943, New York.) The Chief of the Gestapo in Warsaw, one Sommer, was sentenced to death by the Nazi tribunal in Warsaw and the sentence was carried out. Although the Nazis did not divulge the reason for the sentence, reliable sources report that the Gestapo chief was tried because he had failed to properly appraise the power of Jewish resistance. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, London, May 25.)

After the February revolt the terror against the inhabitants of the Ghettos was intensified. The Gestapo agents tried with all their power to stifle the resistance of the Jewish underground. But it failed. On April 19, 1943, an armed rebellion again broke out in Warsaw with more fury than the first one. Although the Jews of Warsaw paid for the uprising with the lives of their heroic fighters, at the same time it was turned into a blood bath for the Germans. The battles continued for more than a week.

The heroism of the Jews and the violence of the battles, in face of the overwhelming superiority of the Germans, is indicated in the broadcast of the secret Polish radio station *SWIT*, according to which 300 Germans were killed and over 1,000 wounded during the street fights in the Warsaw Ghetto. These figures were confirmed by a cable to the *New York Times* from London on May 22, 1943, which states that the Germans were forced to bring into the Ghetto artillery and tanks in order to combat the Jews and that the Jews received arms and ammunition from the Polish underground movement.

The extent of the Jewish armed resistance in Warsaw can also be seen from the statement by Dr. Stephen S. Wise, President of the American Jewish Congress and Dr. Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Jewish Congress revealing the appeal received by them from the Jewish underground movement in Poland. That appeal, sent out of Poland through secret channels and dated April 28, 1943, was signed by the Jewish National Committee and the Jewish Labor Committee and

tells of the "heroic struggle taking place in the Warsaw Ghetto for nine days against the S.S. Troops and the Wehrmacht. . . ." It continued: "Jewish fighters are destroying and burning German ammunition. The Ghetto is in flames, the enemy has lost a thousand wounded and dead. The heroic battle is being continued. The Jews are displaying great heroism."

A report by the Polish Telegraphic Agency in London of May 14, 1943, states that during the struggles in the Warsaw Ghetto over 200 houses were burned down. The members of the Warsaw *Judenrat*, Gustav Wielikowski, Stanislaw Szereszewski, Maksimilian Lichtenbaum and Alfred Stolzmann, were shot by the Germans for taking part in the underground movement.

The Swedish press compares the heroic struggle in the Warsaw Ghetto with the battle of Stalingrad. The Jews of Warsaw fought for every street, every house, before retreating, the Swedish press states.

The Polish Government-in-Exile in London, in a statement on May 17, 1943, reported that the living quarters of nearly 100,000 families, and over 2,000 workshops were destroyed during the April battles in the Warsaw Ghetto. During the siege and bombardment of the Polish capital in September 1939 only 76,000 dwellings were destroyed.

The Belgian Socialist leader Camille Huysmanns, at a conference of the British Labor Party in London on June 17, 1943, declared that "the events in the Warsaw Ghetto are a model of the underground struggle in Europe."

According to information coming from Poland, the democratic elements in the Polish population were of great assistance to the Jewish underground in preparing the armed resistance. The late Wladyslaw Sikorski, Polish Premier and Commander-in-Chief, devoted his broadcast to Poland on May 5, 1943, to the heroic uprising of the Jews and praised the Poles for their assistance to the Jews.

Notwithstanding the bloody struggles, great losses and continuing terror, the Jewish underground movement in Poland still carries on. A statement of the Polish Government-in-Exile in London of May 2, 1943, reports that an underground Jewish political committee, the Jewish National Council, was established in Poland in which are represented all Jewish political parties which existed in Poland before the war, in addition to the workers' underground committee. The task of the Council is to be in constant touch with the secret representative in Poland of the Polish Government-in-Exile, the so-called Commander-in-Chief of Public Resistance, who directs the civil fight against the occupants.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

GOVERNMENT DECLARATIONS, STATEMENTS AND PROTESTS

DECLARATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DECEMBER 17, 1942

THE attention of the Belgian, Czechoslovak, Greek, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norwegian, Polish, Soviet, United Kingdom, United States and Yugoslav Governments and also of the French National Committee has been drawn to numerous reports from Europe that the German authorities, not content with denying to persons of Jewish race in all the territories over which their barbaric rule has been extended, the most elementary human rights, are now carrying into effect Hitler's oft-repeated intention to exterminate the Jewish people in Europe.

From all the occupied countries Jews are being transported in conditions of appalling horror and brutality to Eastern Europe. In Poland, which has been made the principal Nazi slaughterhouse, the ghettos established by the German invader are being systematically emptied of all Jews except a few highly skilled workers required for war industries. None of those taken away are ever heard of again. The able-bodied are slowly worked to death in labor camps. The infirm are left to die of exposure and starvation or are deliberately massacred in mass executions. The number of victims of these bloody cruelties is reckoned in many hundreds of thousands of entirely innocent men, women and children.

The above-mentioned governments and the French National Committee condemn in the strongest possible terms the bestial policy of cold-blooded extermination. They declare that such events can only strengthen the resolve of all freedom-loving peoples to overthrow the barbarous Hitlerite tyranny. They reaffirm their solemn resolution to insure that those responsible for these crimes shall not escape retribution, and to press on with the necessary practical measures to this end.

MESSAGES FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND PRIME MINISTER

CHURCHILL TO PROTEST MASS MEETING IN NEW YORK

ON JULY 21, 1942

Dear Dr. Wise:

Americans who love justice and hate oppression will hail the solemn commemoration in Madison Square Garden as an expression of the determination of the Jewish people to make every sacrifice for victory over the Axis powers. Citizens, regardless of religious allegiance, will share in the sorrow of our Jewish fellow citizens over the savagery of the Nazis against their helpless victims. The Nazis will not succeed in exterminating their victims any more than they will succeed in enslaving mankind. The American people not only sympathize with all victims of Nazi crimes but will hold the perpetrators of these crimes to strict accountability in a day of reckoning which will surely come.

I express the confident hope that the Atlantic Charter and the just world order to be made possible by the triumph of the United Nations will bring the Jews and oppressed people in all lands the four freedoms which Christian and Jewish teachings have largely inspired.

Very sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

You are meeting this evening to condemn Hitler's atrocities in Europe and to offer all assistance to the United Nations in the war on the Axis. You will recall that on October 25th last both President Roosevelt and I expressed the horror felt by all civilized peoples at Nazi butcheries and terrorism and our resolve to place retribution for these crimes among major purposes of this war. The Jews were Hitler's first victims and ever since they have been in the forefront of resistance to Nazi aggression. All over the world Jewish communities have made their contribution to United Nations cause and on behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom I welcome your determination to help as gladly as I acknowledge the eager support which the Jews of Palestine above all are already giving. Over 10,000 are now serving with British forces in Middle East; more than 20,000 are enrolled in various police formations in Palestine and as in this country great numbers are employed in that front line constituted by pursuits and industries essential for the prosecution of war industries and in various services for civil defense.

The first defenses of Palestine are the armies fighting in the West-

ern desert in which Palestinians are playing their full part. Our efforts must primarily be concentrated on ensuring success of these armies. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom took risks in the dark days in 1940 to discharge their obligations in the Middle East and they have throughout been animated by the determination that the Jewish population in Palestine should in all practicable ways play its part in resistance of the United Nations to oppression and brutalities of Nazi Germany which it is the purpose of your meeting this evening to condemn.

WINSTON CHURCHILL.

STATEMENT BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER M. ST. MIKOLAJCZYK
ON BEHALF OF THE POLISH GOVERNMENT, NOVEMBER 27, 1942

The Polish Government, in the fullest understanding of their responsibilities, not neglecting their duty to inform the world of the mass murders and bestialities of the Germans in Poland, have done everything in their power to counteract this terror.

We are fully aware of the fact that the fundamental condition of an effective counteraction against the German program which, in relation to Poland is best expressed by one slogan—to destroy the Polish nation, wiping out the traces of its existence—is to shorten the time of suffering and resistance for the Poles in Poland and to defeat the enemy quickly.

That is why the previous appeals from Poland to open up a second front and now the appeals to hasten up, at any price, the pace of the war, are considered by us to be the fundamental principles of the policy of the Polish Government.

The persecutions of the Jewish minority now in progress in Poland, constitute, however, a separate page of Polish martyrology.

Himmler's order that 1942 must be the year of liquidation of at least 50 per cent of Polish Jewry, is being carried out with utter ruthlessness and a barbarity never before seen in world history.

The figures themselves are most eloquent. Out of over 400,000 people living in the Warsaw Ghetto, over 260,000 have been liquidated from July 17th, that is to say in the last three months. Mass murders are in progress in the whole country. Polish Jews are being exterminated together with Jews from other occupied countries, transported on Polish territory.

From Poland there comes a protest against the murders and persecutions. The protest is accompanied by cries of pity, sympathy and

utter helplessness of these who have to look on what is happening there.

The Poles in Poland fully realize that, as the reports say, the speeded up pace of the murders today applies to Jews only, but tomorrow may be applied to the rest of the population.

In the name of the Polish Government I support this protest of Poles in Poland and that of the Polish National Council. The Polish Government defends the interests of all Polish citizens of whatever religion or nationality they may be, and does it both in the interests of the state and in the name of humanity and Christianity.

I can only hope and pray that the protest of the Polish Government and that of the Polish National Council which represents all the groups of Polish society, will shake the conscience of the world, will find its way to quarters where decisions speeding up military action are taken, that it will bring about an intensified help for those who are still alive, that it will strengthen on the Allied side the determination to punish the crimes and serve as a warning to the assassins whose crimes, duly registered, will not escape a just punishment and who soon will feel the hand of justice fall heavily on their backs.

RESOLUTION OF THE POLISH NATIONAL COUNCIL, NOVEMBER 27, 1942

The Government of the Polish Republic has brought the last news about the mass acres of the Jewish population in Poland, carried out systematically by the German occupying authorities, to the attention of the Allied Governments and of the public opinion in Allied countries. The number of Jews who have been murdered by the Germans in Poland so far, since September, 1939, exceeds 1,000,000.

From the beginning of the conquest of the territories of the Republic, the bestial occupying power has subjected the Polish nation to an appalling policy of extermination, to such an extent that by now the Polish population has been reduced by several million. Now the occupying power has reached the summit of its murder-lust and sadism by organizing mass-murders of hundreds of thousands of Jews in Poland, not only the Polish Jews but the Jews brought from other countries to Poland with the purpose of exterminating them. The German murderers have sent to their death hundreds of thousands of men, women, children and old people. Their purpose is to enfeeble the Polish nation and completely to exterminate the Jews in Poland before the end of this year. In the execution of this plan Adolf Hitler and his henchmen are using the most appalling tortures.

The Polish Government and the Polish National Council, and the

Polish nation at home, have often protested against the German crimes, and announced that a just punishment would be meted out to these offenders against mankind. Lately the Polish Government has submitted to the Polish National Council the draft of a law providing for the punishment of the German criminals.

In the face of the latest German crimes, unparalleled in the history of mankind, which have been carried out against the Polish nation, and particularly against the Jewish population of Poland, the Polish National Council again raises a strong protest and pronounces an indictment before the whole civilized world.

The Polish National Council solemnly declares:

By its heroic attitude at home the Polish nation is gathering its strength for the day of retribution, amidst unspeakable sufferings.

The Polish National Council appeals to all the Allied Nations and to all the nations now suffering together with the Polish nation under the German yoke, that they should at once start a common action against this trampling and profanation of all principles of morality and humanity by the Germans, and against the extermination of the Polish nation and other nations, an extermination the most appalling expression of it which is provided by the mass-murders of the Jews in Poland and in the rest of Europe which Hitler has subjected.

To all those who are suffering and undergoing torture in Poland, both to Poles and to Jews, to all those who are taking part in the struggle for liberation and for the preparation of a just retribution on the German criminals, the Polish National Council sends words of hope and of unshakeable faith in the recovery of freedom for all.

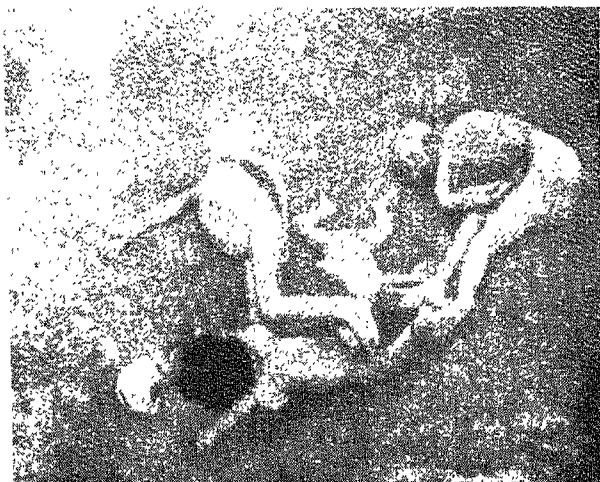
The day of victory and punishment is approaching.

WARNING OF THE POLISH UNDERGROUND PUBLISHED IN THE POLISH
UNDERGROUND PAPER IN WARSAW, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA
ON MARCH 11, 1943

The Polish people, although itself a victim of frightful terror, looks with horror and deep sympathy on the murder of the remainder of the Jewish population in Poland by the Germans.

It has voiced its protests against this crime, a protest which reached the conscience of the whole free world, and it gave to the Jews who escaped from the Ghetto or from annihilation camps help so extensive that the German occupiers published a decree which threatens with death those Poles who helped Jews who were in hiding.

But there are some individuals devoid of honor and conscience



YOUNG VICTIMS OF STARVATION



STARVING JEWISH CHILDREN IN THE STREET
OF THE WARSAW GHETTO

AMTLICHE BEKANNTMACHUNGEN

Bekanntmachung

betreffend der Bildung eines geschlossenen jüdischen Wohnbezirks in der Stadt Lublin

Aus zwingenden orientlichen Gründen wird mit sofortiger Wirkung in der Stadt Lublin ein geschlossener jüdischer Wohnbezirk (Ghetto) gebildet.

Zur Durchführung dieser Maßnahme ordne ich an:
1. Das Ghetto der Stadt Lublin wird durch folgende Straßen abgegrenzt: Eda Kowolka über Komalita Krawierka an dem in der Straße bezeichneten Hauseingang entlang über das freie Feld Sienna links und zur Kalinowiczynska bis zur Eda Franciszka la Franciszka über Ulica bis zur Eda Lubartowska Lubartowska bis zur Eda Komalita Delimitation der Gebäude sonstige von Behörden und Organisationen besetzte Häuser und Kirchen bleiben hieron unberührt.

2. In diesem jüdischen Wohnbezirk haben sämtliche in der Stadt Lublin ansässigen Juden zu wohnen. Außerhalb des Ghettos ist Juden der Aufenthalt verboten.

3. Die innerhalb des jüdischen Wohnbezirks wohnenden Nichtjuden haben bis zum 10. April 1941 ihre Wohnungen außerhalb des Ghettos zu verlegen. Wohnungen werden durch das Städt. Wohnungsamt bei Umfiedlung (Kriegs-Tribunal) nachgewiesen.

Nichtjuden die nach dem 10. April 1941 ihre Wohnungen im jüdischen Wohnbezirk nicht verlassen haben werden zwangsweise ausgewiesen. Bei der zwangsweisen Ausweisung darf nur Handkoffergepack bis zum Höchstgewicht von 25 kg pro Person mitgenommen werden. Spritzge Güter werden abgenommen.

4. Die nach außerhalb des Ghettos wohnenden Juden haben ihre Wohnungen bis zum 15. April 1941 in den jüdischen Wohnbezirk zu verlegen.

Die in den Straßen Kalinowiczynska und Siematowiczynska wohnenden Juden haben ihre Wohnungen bis zum 1. Mai 1941 zu räumen und in das Ghetto umzusiedeln.

Wohnungen im Ghetto werden durch das städtische Quartieramt Lubartowska 100 zugeteilt. Einrichtungsgegenstände und die zum persönlichen Gebrauch bestimmten Sachen sowie Geschäfteeinrichtungen und ordnungsgemäß erworbene Waren, vorräte können dabei mitgenommen werden.

Soweit Einrichtungsgegenstände und sonstige Güter nicht in der neuen Unterkunft im jüdischen Wohnbezirk untergebracht werden können sind sie der Treuhänderstelle in Lublin anzubieten. Sie dürfen erst nach Freigabe durch diese im freien Verkehr veräußert werden.

Einrichtungsgegenstände in verlassenem jüdischen Wohnungen die von anderen Mietlern benutzt werden sind der Treuhänderstelle in Lublin zu benennen. Ueber die Art und Weise der Verwertung oder die anderweitige Verwendung dieser Gegenstände ergeben sich dort aus noch näherer Anweisung.

5. Juden die ihre Wohnungen innerhalb der gleichen Straßen nicht in den jüdischen Wohnbezirk verlegen haben werden zwangsweise aus der Stadt Lublin ausgewiesen. Bei der zwangsweisen Ausweisung darf nur Handkoffergepack bis zum Höchstgewicht von 25 kg pro Person mitgenommen werden. Juden die via zum Ablauf der Freilassung aus Lublin wegziehen können ihr geliebtes Gut mitnehmen. Die bei der Umfiedlung in Frage kommenden Gemeinen im Distrikt Lublin werden dem Judentum besonders bevorzugt geben.

Anträge auf Umfiedlung sind durch den Judentrat an das Städt. Wohnungsamt in Lublin vorzulegen.

6. Labengelächste Werkstätten und andere Unternehmen von Juden die außerhalb des Ghettos liegen bleiben von der Umfiedlung vorläufig ausgeschlossen. Sie sind sofort schriftlich beim Städt. Wohnungsamt anzumelden und dürfen teilweise als Unterkünfte benutzt werden.

7. Innerhalb des Ghettos liegende nichtjüdische Dienststellen Werte und Unternehmen sind bis zum 1. Mai 1941 in andere Stadtbezirke zu verlegen. Ausnahmeanträge sind beim Stadthauptmann in Lublin zu stellen.

8. Nichtjuden ist das Wohnen und die unbefugte Aufenthalt im Ghetto verboten. Nichtjuden ist es untersagt Juden Unterkunft zu gewähren. Bei

Verstößen werden die Wohnungen der Nichtjuden eingezogen.

9. Mit der Durchführung der Maßnahmen zur Bildung des Ghettos beauftragt ich den Stadthauptmann in Lublin.

10. Die ordnungsmäßige Bildung des jüdischen Wohnbezirks die Aufrechterhaltung der Ordnung die Unterhaltung der sanitären und sozialen Einrichtungen bei der Judentrat der Stadt Lublin zu belagern. Er hat für dem Stadthauptmann über die erfolgreiche Durchführung der Maßnahmen zu berichten.

11. Die Nichtjuden sind verpflichtet die Umfiedlung ergebenden Anordnungen und Durchführungsbestimmungen wird schriftlich vorzulegen und befristet. Vermögenswerte werden eingezogen. Lublin den 24. März 1941.

Der Chef des Distrikts Lublin
Gen. J. J. J. J.
Gouverneur

Bekanntmachung

Ab 1. April 1941 wird eine Grundgebühr für die installierten Gasmeter erhoben und zwar:

1. 8 monatlich für einen Stammigen Gaswasser.

2. 1 monatlich für einen Gaswasser über 8 Räume.

Die Grundgebühr wird dem Rechnungsbetrag einmalig für den Monat April 1941 aufgeschlagen.

Warschau den 27. März 1941
Der Bezugsbeauftragte des Distrikts Lublin für die Stadt Warschau
Gen. J. J. J. J.

Bekanntmachung

Sämtliche Dienststellen des Arbeitsamtes Warschau sind über das Fernsprechamt Warschau unter den Nummern 22400, 22401 zu streichen. Außerdem haben nachstehende Dienststellen Sondernummern und wozu:

Arbeitsamtvermittlung 977 20880
Bauwerke 971 21472
Medizinische Vermittlung 972 20836
Arbeitsamt und Arbeitsbuch 972 20910

Warschau den 27. März 1941
Arbeitsamt Warschau

recruited from the criminal world, who seek to create for themselves a new source of income by blackmailing both the Poles who helped the Jews to hide and the Jews themselves.

The Leadership of the Civilian Struggle warns that these cases of blackmail are noted and will be punished with the fullest severity of the law, immediately if possible, but in any case in the future.

THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CIVILIAN STRUGGLE

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES SUBMITTED AT THE WHITE HOUSE ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1942 BY A DELEGATION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS COMPRISING THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS, B'NAI B'RITH, THE JEWISH LABOR COMMITTEE, THE SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA, UNION OF ORTHODOX RABBIS

Mr. President:

We come to you as representatives of all sections of the Jewish community of the United States.

Within recent months all Americans have been horrified by the verification of reports concerning the barbarities against the inhabitants of countries overrun by Hitler's forces. To these horrors has now been added the news of Hitler's edict calling for the extermination of all Jews in the subjugated lands.

Already almost two million Jews, men, women and children, have been cruelly done to death, and five million more Jews live under the threat of a similar doom.

The record of these heinous crimes against the Jews in Nazi Europe is detailed in the attached memorandum. Every device of a perverted and malignant ingenuity is being employed to hasten the process of their destruction. The result is a crime so monstrous as to be without parallel in history.

The victims of this brutality are guilty of no crime save that they are the children of the people through whose divine law and through whose prophets the world was given the ideas which constitute a basic part of the civilization that the Nazis seek to destroy. Through the bodies of these innocent and defenseless victims the Nazis strike at civilization itself. Death and destruction follow everywhere in the wake of the Nazi armies. Lands have been laid waste and their peoples destroyed or enslaved.

In the midst of their suffering, however, the peoples of Europe are sustained by a hope that the victory of the Democracies will destroy

medieval darkness. Hitler would be less of the sadist and brutalitarian than he is if he did not resort to this means of treating the Jews. Violence against the Jewish people is the usual stepping-stone to violence to humanity. The concentration camp and murder, piecemeal and wholesale, are in line with what is to be expected of this power that is out to conquer the world.

Fortunately, the world is now thoroughly aroused to what Hitler and Hitlerism stand for and the war is on to a finish. The United Nations is but the collective name for all decent humans awakened to an understanding of the danger civilization is facing. I have all the confidence in the world that our side will win this war and win it conclusively. The victory the United Nations are out to achieve includes conditions of peace under which anti-Semitism as a part of statecraft, will be forever wiped off the face of the earth.

STATEMENT BY WILLIAM GREEN, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN
FEDERATION OF LABOR, NOVEMBER 21, 1942

The atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis in Europe against the helpless minorities have shocked the conscience of mankind. They have aroused the indignation of all classes of people who practice tolerance and who believe in justice. Hitler and his associates have placed themselves in the murderers' class. For that reason they must answer for their crimes when the war is won and Hitler is defeated. American labor protests against the murder of hostages, the persecution of the Jewish people and the cruelty which has been imposed upon the people who reside in conquered nations.

EXTRACT FROM AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY DR. STEPHEN S. WISE
AT THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONFERENCE IN NEW YORK
ON AUGUST 29, 1943

This year of our calendar will forever be commemorated because of the attempted extermination of the whole Jewish people. Attempted and, alas, not in vain; for two-thirds and more of the Axis world's Jewish population has been murdered, most foully and unnaturally murdered, by methods of open and devastating terror. The aim was, as recently reported by a Christian who has just emerged from the Polish Underground, "to wipe out Jews as a people and individuals, to exterminate them systematically as a race by sheer mass murder without any exceptions."

The Jewish Underground relates the unbelievably hideous details

of the death camps at Treblinka, for example, on the railway running from Warsaw to Bialystok, the death houses, the special extermination machinery, the liquidating gasses piped into death cells, the victims dying daily by thousands. A huge poster greets the newcomers to Treblinka: "You can be confident of your future!" An ironic invitation to death at its cruelest! For the victims, we say to these bestial executioners: Unlike death with honor you have brought to your victims, death and shame are swiftly becoming your portion. The United Nations have made us confident of your immediate future and there is and will hereafter be no future anywhere on earth for such as seek to set race against race and faith against faith. Yours have been ten years of horror and pillage and rapine. Oblivion were your most merciful fate! We have lived and served throughout millenia. Your thousand years have ended within a decade. We resume life with gladder hope, because civilization and freedom are about to extirpate their organized and united enemies—the Axis Powers.

PART TWO
THE WEALTH THAT HAS
BEEN DESTROYED

THE THOUSAND-YEAR-OLD JEWISH
COMMUNITY IN POLAND

A THOUSAND threads bind the Jews of Poland to Polish soil. In the course of the nine long centuries which have gone by since the Jews first entered Poland towards the end of the eleventh century, strong links have been forged which bind the Jews to Polish soil with iron bonds; the common earth which nourished both Poles and Jews has been saturated with the sighs and tears of both people.

During those nine centuries nations have disappeared in fire and flood, countries have been destroyed in bloody tempests, new nations have arisen to enlarge history's horizon, new worlds have been discovered, but the Polish Jews have remained a distinct people, true to their faith and to their adopted home.

Old Polish legends indicate that the settlement of Jews in Poland began in ancient times, long before its recorded history began. One characteristic legend tells of the people gathering at Gniezno, at that time the Polish capital, to elect a ruler. All the candidates were rejected and a deadlock developed. It was finally decided to offer the crown to the first stranger who should enter the city on the following day. The first stranger to enter turned out to be Abraham Prochownik, a Jew. The crown was offered to him and Prochownik asked for three days to decide. On the morning of the fourth day a throng of Poles gathered outside Prochownik's door to hear his decision. Unable to control his impatience, one of the Poles, by the name of Piast, broke open the door to demand a decision, whereupon Prochownik said: "I cannot accept the crown—but I offer you a real king—this man Piast who has had the courage to break open the door when he saw that the country was in danger of remaining without a ruler."

There had been a slow influx of Jews into Poland in the early days of the eleventh century. They came mostly from Byzantium, Persia, the Caucasus and the shores of the Black Sea. Most of them settled in the eastern part of the country. But the large hegira of Jews, the large numbers who were the forerunners of the huge Jewish population of

twentieth century Poland, were refugees from Germany, fugitives from the mass attacks against the Jews launched by the army of the Crusades, which was organized to wrest the Holy Land from the Moslems. In the atmosphere of fanaticism which accompanied the Crusades many thousands of Jews were slaughtered in the German territories, especially in the regions of the Rhine and the Danube.

It was from this brutal and devastating attack that the Jews of Germany fled eastward to Poland. The country was young and still undeveloped; its population was primitive and had been won over to Christianity only a hundred years before, under Miecyslaw the First. There are numerous legends which have come down from those times. One tells of a message that fell from the heavens as the Jews of Germany were fasting and praying, bidding them go to Poland where they would find rest and peace. On their journey eastward they heard birds chirp from the trees, *po-leen, po-leen*—two Hebrew syllables meaning "Here spend the night,"—and on the branches of the trees they saw scrolls of the Talmud, a sure omen that in their new home they would be able to cultivate Jewish scholarship.

An historic fact is that the Polish king, Wladyslaw Herman, hearing of the persecutions against the Jews in Germany, instructed his emissaries to induce the Jews to send a delegation to ask for the right to settle in his domain. The delegation arrived, but before it had a chance to make its request, the King invited them to settle in Poland and help in the development of the country.

The newly arrived Jews settled in Gniezno and Poznan, which were then the principal cities of Poland. The trade of the time was based on barter and Jewish merchants began the importation of silks, velvets, carpets, fruit and wine from the Orient in exchange for Polish products, such as grain and furs. Later the Jews introduced the minting of copper and silver coins to be used as mediums of exchange, as was the practice in the western part of Europe. The first mint contractors were the Jews, just as they were the first to contract for all government taxes. Poland's earliest coins were inscribed with Hebrew characters.

With the passage of the years the Jews became deeply integrated into the life of Poland and it was hardly possible to imagine a Poland without Jews. For a long time they enjoyed a peaceful existence, the beneficiaries of many privileges from the Polish rulers who welcomed a trading class in a country predominantly agricultural. In 1264 Boleslaw Pobożny, King of Great Poland, and grandfather of Casimir the First, the Great Reformer of the Polish State, inaugurated special legislation for the protection of the Jews. This legislation was recognized by

nearly all the succeeding kings of Poland as the "Royal Privilege", and was an integral part of the Polish constitution. It guaranteed to the Jews full religious and communal autonomy, including even the protection of the Jews against the rule of other groups of the Polish population.

There were occasions in the years following when the Church sought to arouse the population against the Jews. At such times the Jews were taken under the royal protection. The nobility, too, were champions of Jewish security. The famous Rabbi Mozes Isserles, of Krakow, 1520-1572, wrote in a letter: "It is better to have a dry morsel in peace in these regions of the Kingdom of Krakow where there is no such strong hatred against us as there is in German lands."

CHAPTER TWO

THE ECONOMICS OF POLISH JEWRY

IN the almost 1,000 years of its history Polish Jewry has made a considerable contribution to the economic life of Poland, and has played a prominent part in many vital fields of that country's economic development. All of this has now been completely destroyed; the wealth of Polish Jewry has been confiscated, its tools of production taken away, and the Jews who have managed to escape slaughter have been reduced to starvation.

The economic contribution of Polish Jewry to the life of the country was especially notable throughout the 21 years of the existence of the Polish Republic, from 1918 to 1939. The vitality and resilience displayed by this largest Jewish community in Europe during those two decades, have few parallels anywhere.

Before the first World War, and for a century and a half previous to 1914, Polish Jewry lived under three separate political regimes and three different economic set-ups.

The largest number of Polish Jews lived in the former Russian Poland, the so-called Congress-Poland, and in the Eastern provinces, where there were many Jewish craftsmen and artisans. The industrial centers of Poland, such as Warsaw, Lodz and Bialystok, in the growth of which the initiative and the enterprise of Polish Jews played an important part, had large numbers of Jewish factory workers.

Nearly a million Jews lived in Galicia, one of the least developed provinces in the Austro-Hungarian Empire of which it formed a part for 150 years. Galician Jewry had fewer large-scale merchants and fewer industrialists than either Upper Silesia and Posen or Russian Poland; it had fewer artisans and industrial workers than the latter, and comparatively more small traders. A distinctive feature of the Jewish economy in Galicia was the fairly large number of Jews in rural communities and employed in rural occupations. The proportion of Jews in the liberal professions was larger in Galicia than in Russian Poland because of the more liberal educational policy of the Habsburg rulers as compared with the Romanoffs.

The smallest in numbers, but strong in its economic influence, was the Jewish community in the German (Prussian) territories of former Poland, Posnan and Upper Silesia. During the 19th century and the first years of the 20th century, many Jews went westward and settled in the interior of Germany, but many more remained and became Polish citizens when these provinces became part of the newly established Polish Republic.

When Poland was reunited after the collapse of Czarist Russia, Germany and Austro-Hungary in 1918, the Jews entered the new Republic as a part of the population possessing a large, well-to-do middle class with substantial business connections all over Europe and partly in America and Asia. In the course of years the differences in the economic structure of the three sections of Polish Jewry largely disappeared and the structure became more unified. Its economic growth might have normally developed to a high level were it not for the anti-Semitism which hampered its growth.

The vocational distribution of Polish Jewry shortly before the present war can be seen from the following figures: out of 100 persons gainfully employed there were:

- 42 artisans and workers
- 37 business men and clerks
- 4 farmers
- 4 transportation and insurance employees
- 13 miscellaneous (professionals, bank employees, domestics, etc.).

The above figures are to be compared with the following, showing the vocational distribution of the non-Jewish population in Poland: out of 100 gainfully employed persons there were:

- 61 farmers
- 19 artisans and factory workers
- 6 merchants
- 4 transportation and insurance employees
- 10 miscellaneous (professionals, bank employees, domestics, etc.).

It will be readily seen from the above figures that the Polish Jews were not, as has so often been alleged, predominantly traders and *luftmenschen*; on the contrary, out of every 5 gainfully employed Jews in Poland, 2 were artisans who labored fourteen to sixteen hours a day to earn a meager existence, lacking capital to modernize their machinery and to expand their production. In some sections of Poland the ratio of normal laborers among the Jews was even higher. Thus in Polesie (in the East) 48% of the gainfully employed Jews were working people and artisans; in Warsaw 49%; in the Bialystok province 58%; in the

district of Lodz 53%. Political and economic anti-Semitism, displayed not only by the government but also by capital and some labor groups, was responsible for the comparatively few Jews in factories and in rural occupations.

The great contribution by the Jewish merchants to the economic development of Poland since the Jews first entered the country was not recognized by the leaders of the Polish Republic, and everything was done to make their existence difficult. Public credits were largely closed to them and they lived under the constant scourge of an unjust system of taxation. But all this notwithstanding, Jewish merchants, like Jews in Poland generally, paid their taxes and bought government bonds proportionately more than the other groups of the population. Of more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ billions zlotys of state and municipal taxes paid by the entire population of Poland in an average pre-war fiscal year, more than 35% (more than $1\frac{1}{4}$ billion of zlotys) were paid by the Jews, although they constituted only about 10% of the population. This strikingly indicates the importance of Polish Jews in the economical and financial structure of the Republic of Poland.

Four percent of Polish Jewry, totalling about 150,000 persons, were farmers or engaged in similar rural occupations. The number was not distributed evenly. The majority was concentrated in the Eastern part of Poland and in Eastern Galicia.

Jews began to play a tremendous role in the economic growth of the country from the very beginning of their settlement, about 1,000 years ago. Until recent decades the predominant urban element of the Polish population, they had initiated almost every new development in Poland's economy; export and import trade, chemicals, foods, printing, transportation, and most recently, the radio industry. Jewish initiative, Jewish versatility and the knowledge of languages so vital in establishing commercial relations in foreign countries, enabled the Jews to play this role. Although about 10% of the general population, Jews contributed 25% to the national income. After the abolition of serfdom in the Russian Empire, it was Jews who, by granting credits to the Polish farmers, saved this backbone of the Polish nation from economic catastrophe. The Jews' keen sense for economic progress played an important part in building up industry during the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries.

It is important to note that in building up Polish industry Jews competed with the Germans who had for centuries endeavored to seize control of industrial production in Poland.

The textile industry in Poland, especially the cotton-spinning industry, was among the largest in the world. The following tables will show its development, to which the Polish Jews contributed largely, as founders, owners, organizers and distributors.

Poland had in 1937 a total of 2,895,000 spindles and looms installed in spinning and weaving mills, excluding very small establishments. Out of those there were 1,926,000 spindles and 46,000 looms in cotton spinning and weaving departments. All over the world there were in 1937 no more than 150,000,000 spindles in the cotton industries, the largest number divided as follows:

39	millions	in the	United Kingdom
27	"	"	U. S. A.
12	"	"	Japan
10	"	"	U. S. S. R.
10	"	"	Germany
10	"	"	France
5	"	"	Italy
5	"	"	China
3	"	"	Czechoslovakia.

The Polish cotton spinning, weaving, printing and finishing industry, among whose founders and leaders the Jews played a prominent part, was rated among the most technically perfect. Due to the fact that Polish spindles continually operated in three shifts, the output of the Polish mills was proportionately greater than in any other country.

Almost 22% of the country's industrial workers (160,000 out of 730,000) were employed in the textile industry. There was no other industry in Poland employing so many workers as the so-called Jewish textile industry. The total number of textile plants in Poland in 1937 was about 2,400. The value of the goods produced by this highly developed branch of Polish industry amounted in 1937 to more than 1,350 million zlotys. Lodz, the Polish Manchester, employed 72.6% of all of the textile workers in Poland. Bialystok, which was the second largest textile center in Poland, employed more than 10% of the textile workers, very many of them Jews. The Jews were the real moving spirits of this enormous industry and their initiative in this field was as important as in many other branches of the economic life of Poland.

The following figures will show the percentage of Jewish participation in all fields of the Polish economic structure.

In the year 1933 there were in all Poland (except the western provinces) 395,000 individual business establishments. 52.5% of them

(208,000) were Jewish establishments. Out of every 100 businesses in the cities 58.5% were Jewish. Out of every 100 businesses in the eastern and southern cities, 76% were Jewish. No one could imagine the peace-time economic structure of pre-war Poland without the enormous help of the Jewish business men, professionals and working people.

Jewish industrial firms and mercantile enterprises, and banking houses with capital amounting to two or three million rubles and later zlotys, were not uncommon, and there were cases of Jewish financiers and industrialists raising sums as high as 100,000,000 zlotys for building large railways.

Some of the trades or industries, such as grain, woolens and timber were entirely developed by Jews. Jewish wholesale trade was on the whole much better organized and much more efficient than Jewish retail trade, which suffered under the handicap of too many small stores and the consequent lack of efficient organization.

Jewish economic life was aggravated by the periods of depression and by the taxation policy of the government. The number of unemployed Jews grew from year to year in all fields of economic activity.

The following figures show the percentage of Jews in each occupation in various parts of Poland before the present war:

	<i>Commerce</i>	<i>Industry and Crafts</i>	<i>Transport</i>
All Poland	63	24	10
Congress Poland	67	30	15
East Poland	88	53	20
Galicia	74	20	9
West Poland	8	1	—

Jewish crafts in Poland are as old as the Jewish community. In some of the handicrafts Jews played an especially important part. Thus 80% of all tailors in Poland, and 40% of garment workers of all kinds, were Jews. Every fifth Jewish artisan was a tailor. Jews supplied 40% of the shoemakers, 33% of the bakers, more than 33% of the butchers, 33% of the glaziers and 75% of the barbers in Poland.

One finds corresponding figures in the vocational structure of the Jewish emigrants from Poland who settled in different countries. A large number of handicraft workers who emigrated to the United States

consisted of Jews. In 1904, for example, out of every 100 immigrants in the following trades, Jews constituted the following percentages:

Furriers	80%
Capmakers	79%
Bookbinders	72%
Tailors	70%
Watchmakers	59%
Carpenters	59%
Tinsmiths	58%
Upholsterers	53%
Glaziers	51%

In the year 1910 Jews constituted the majority of the immigrants to the United States in the following professions: capmakers, furriers, bookbinders, tailors, watchmakers, tinsmiths, carpenters and milliners. Of these the majority came from Poland.

The mechanization of the Jewish workshops was slight in comparison to the non-Jewish workshops, which enjoyed municipal and government credits. The number of Jews in handicraft schools was comparatively small: 20% in private establishments and from 1% to 8% (depending on the year) in municipal and government craft schools. The number of private craft schools operated by Jews amounted to 20%. Obviously, discrimination was practiced against Jews in craft schools. The resultant lowering of the standard of work and the reduction in consumption due to the economic crisis made the situation of many Jewish artisans unbearable, and they had to depend for their raw materials on the larger entrepreneur. The low earnings of these artisans made it possible to export their cheap products.

The hundreds of thousands of Jewish artisans and merchants were organized into local and national associations which played an important part in the country's economic life, and often elected their own representatives to the Polish Parliament (Sejm) and even to the Polish Senate.

The significant part played by the Jews in developing Poland's foreign trade can be seen from the fact that most so-called bilateral chambers of commerce, such as the Polish-American, Polish-Palestine, Polish-British chambers, were founded and for the most part were led by Jews.

A tenth of Polish Jewry lived in Warsaw and was fairly representative of the whole of Polish Jewry in its economic structure. There were, according to the 1931 census, 820,000 non-Jews and 350,000 Jews in

the capital. Fifty percent of the non-Jews (413,000) and 40% (150,000) of the Jews were gainfully employed.

Of the larger business people in Warsaw 2,500 were non-Jews and 6,000 Jews; of professionals there were 1,000 non-Jews and 3,000 Jews; of the lower middle-class there were 13,000 non-Jews and 43,000 Jews; professionals and officials accounted for 20,000 non-Jews and 13,000 Jews. An insignificant number of Jews were employed as workers in the government and municipal transport systems, and as government and municipal officials, due to discrimination.

It was not easy for Polish Jewry to advance economically in the decades between the two wars, as they were engaged in a constant defensive struggle against a policy that would oust them from all their hard-won positions. In this struggle Polish Jewry was greatly aided by the help of Jewish organizations abroad as well as by individual Jews in America, Palestine and other countries who sent money to their relatives in Poland.

Even as far back as the years before the First World War there was a strong movement among Polish Jewry towards economic re-stratification which found its concrete expression mostly in the establishment of vocational schools. During the two decades of Polish independence this movement became much stronger, and carried on its work partly with money from Jewish organizations abroad, partly with subventions from Polish municipalities, but mainly with funds collected among the Polish Jews themselves. The vocational schools included agricultural training schools as well as craft and technical schools. It was almost impossible for Jews to settle on the land, however, because of the attitude of the government and the non-Jewish population. Most graduates of agricultural training schools emigrated to Palestine or to South America.

All the wealth of Polish Jewry was confiscated by the Nazis, at first with a semblance of legality—although in direct contravention to the Hague Convention—but later by simple looting. Owners of establishments were forced to give full information to Nazi commissars, who later drove them out of town and took over their businesses without compensation. Some of the Jewish wealth stolen by the Germans was later "sold" by them to Poles and Ukrainians. Jews were allowed to retain only the most necessary tools required for producing goods for the Nazi military machine. Much of the machinery found in Jewish factories was carted off to Germany.

The anti-Jewish legislation in economic matters was promulgated during the years 1939, 1940 and partly in 1941. Its basis is the expropriation of all Jewish establishments located outside of the Ghettoes, and the confiscation of everything which belongs to the exiled Jews, whatever the reason for their exile might be. Practically all the bank deposits, with very few exceptions, were confiscated. Lawlessness became law. All the Nazi decrees had for their sole purpose the destruction of Jewish economic life.

THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

ONE of the most important achievements of Polish Jewry in the period between the world wars was the cooperative movement, into the making of which went twenty years of tremendous energy and organizing ability.

The institution of credit cooperatives had been known to Jewish communities in Eastern Europe long before 1921 in the form of loan and savings societies. But these were isolated, uncoordinated local undertakings, and it was only in 1921 that the foundation was laid for the organization of Jewish cooperatives which grew into a mighty instrument of Jewish economic self-protection in the extraordinarily difficult conditions of Jewish life in Poland.

The end of the first World War left the three and a quarter million Jews of Poland economically ruined, with trade and industry broken down. The Jews, being an urban element, entered the newly-born Polish Republic in a much worse state than the other predominantly rural national minority groups, the Ukrainians and White-Russians, who resumed their productive farming immediately after the end of the war, or the Polish peasantry which constituted 65% of the total Polish population. The urban Christian population was largely absorbed in industry, government, municipal and railway services, while the Polish proletariat in the heavy and medium industries soon found employment in the workshops and factories.

The millions of Jews ruined by the war found great difficulty in adjusting themselves to the new situation. Far from evolving any project for helping the Jews, the government agencies ignored their economic usefulness in building up the country. A series of restrictions in practice rather than in law, had the effect of depressing the Jews into the unstable positions of petty tradesmen and middlemen.

The cities were poor, finance, capital and credit facilities were extremely limited and granted usually only to the most solid enterprises while the big private banks prevented even the well-to-do Jewish businessmen from obtaining adequate credits. The Jewish tradesmen and

artisans then evolved the project of cooperative banking to enable them to play an active part in the economic life of the country.

The leaders of the young Polish Republic, many of them formerly active in Polish cooperative movements, in 1920 introduced a very liberal law governing cooperatives by which any group of citizens could establish a credit, consumers' or producers' cooperative by filing a simple declaration in court. Utilizing this law, the Jews established credit and other types of cooperatives most suitable for their needs. In every town and city in which there was a minimum Jewish population of two hundred families a nucleus of a people's bank was formed according to these well-established cooperative principles:

1. Each member to have only one vote irrespective of the number of shares he had bought;
2. Every section of the population to be represented in the management;
3. The rate of interest not to exceed that of the solid government banks;
4. The chief source of financial means to be contributions by the local population and no more than 200 Zl. to be outside credit;
5. Loans to be granted only for purposes of production, such as the purchase of raw material and tools, but by no means for household expenses.

On these foundations the Jewish population in Poland erected an imposing structure of cooperative credit organizations. There were in Poland at the outbreak of the war 702 cooperative people's banks, 42 merchants' banks, 17 agricultural cooperatives, 13 producers' cooperatives, a total of 774 cooperatives.

The total membership of the cooperatives was 136,000. On the basis of an average of five persons to a family, that meant well over 600,000 Jews, a fifth of the total Jewish population in Poland grouped around the Jewish cooperative movement. The total value of the shares purchased by the members amounted to 18,000,000 Zlotys (about \$3,600,000) a striking evidence of the confidence which the cooperatives enjoyed. When the war broke out, total deposits in the cooperatives exceeded 39,000,000 Zlotys and the total credits the cooperatives had from outside, mainly from the American Joint Reconstruction Foundation and partly from the Polish Government, amounted to about 7,000,000 Zlotys.

The Jewish cooperative movement in Poland had its main source of credit in the means supplied by the American Joint Distribution Com-

mittee. In 1924 the Joint, together with the Jewish Colonization Association, established in Paris a society whose aim was to grant loans to cooperatives. This society, the name of which was American Joint Reconstruction Foundation, had a stock capital of \$2,000,000. The loans granted to the Jewish cooperatives in Poland by the Foundation during the period of 1924-1939 amounts to \$3,000,000. In addition \$320,000 of the Joint's money were devaluated due to inflation in 1923 and thus deducted from its books.

1930 was the year of the greatest expansion of the Jewish cooperative movement: one-third of the total Jewish population in Poland were members of cooperatives through the heads of their families. The membership included:

- 60.5%—merchants
- 27.0%—tradesmen
- 12.5%—farmers and free trades.

The economic crisis had its fatal repercussion in the cooperative field and especially in the Jewish cooperative movements. While in 1921 the operating capital of the cooperatives amounted to 108,000,000 Zl., in 1933 it dropped to 66,000,000 because a number of savings accounts were withdrawn. As a result the income went down, so that in 1932 as many as 52% of Jewish cooperatives showed a deficit. In succeeding years the situation began to improve. In 1937 only 37% operated with a deficit and in 1938 this figure dropped to 28%. The main activity of these cooperatives was to extend loans to their members for 6 to 8 months, payable in weekly or monthly installments. In larger cities they also discounted bills of exchange acquired through commercial transactions.

Loans granted by the Jewish cooperatives in 1938 amounted to 282,000,000 Zl. Among the total number of credit cooperatives in Poland 13.3% were Jewish but in comparison with all branches of cooperatives only 6% of the institutions and 4.7% of total membership were Jewish. This may be explained by the economic structure of the Jewish population which was favorable to an extensive development of credit cooperatives while all efforts for the establishment of other kinds of cooperatives met with structural difficulties.

The American Joint Distribution Committee played an important part in helping to organize the cooperative movement as soon as the war was over and in advancing the cooperatives long term credits at low rates of interest. In recent years, the American Federation for Polish Jews, by investing a substantial sum of money in the Central

Federation for Incasso, assisted the creation of at least seventy-five cooperatives in small localities where previously they did not exist.

Thus a widespread network of popular banking establishments granted loans to Jewish artisans, traders and merchants to enable them to lead a self-dependent economic existence and to overcome the economic and political obstacles which increased from year to year.

The cooperatives were united into three Federations which furnished their affiliates with legal advice and economic guidance and checked their finances at least once every year. The Federation had a press, published books and pamphlets of an educational character, and had a department to propagate among the Jewish masses the necessity for saving even out of small incomes.

In Warsaw was situated the financial central agency of the cooperatives under the name "Central Federation For Incasso." It was so popular even among non-Jewish banks, that its turnover in checks and promissory notes amounted to some 100,000 operations each month, the record for all of Poland. Wilno and Lwow had regional banks for the cooperatives. In forty-five cities, among them Wilno, Bialystok, Czestochowa, Lodz, Kalisz, Lwow and others, the cooperatives erected their own buildings, a fact which illustrates the firm hold the cooperative movement had on the public.

The Jewish cooperative system though profiting from the benefits of the liberal cooperative legislation of Poland and from the privileges connected therewith had always a grievance against the Government banks for not properly understanding the needs of the Jewish credit institutions.

In 1938 total loans extended by the Polish Bank and the Bank for the National Economy to the Jewish cooperative banks amounted to 2,000,000 Zl., only as the total of all loans extended by these cooperative banks to their members amounted in that year to approximately 110,000,000 Zl. Thus the sums received from the Government sources were less than 2% of that sum. It is estimated that the Government loans to non-Jewish credit cooperatives amounted to 10% of the total balance of their loans. Loans granted to the Jewish cooperatives by the American Joint Federation amounted to approximately 8% of the total of their loan turnover.

Credit cooperatives were not the only Jewish cooperatives in Poland; there were also consumers', producers' and agricultural cooperatives.

FARMERS COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

According to statistical data based on the census of population in Poland for 1921, there were 155,005 Jewish farmers in that year and 5.7% of Jews made their living by farming. The figure for 1931 however is 125,100 only and as few as 4% Jews remained on farms.

There were in Poland several associations which helped Jewish farmers with loans and expert advice. To them belonged the "ORT" which helped to bring to life several garden cooperatives for the purchase of seeds and cooperative sale of vegetables; the Jewish Colonization Association which did much to support them with loans. In 1938 there were 26 Jewish farmer cooperatives in Poland with 5,300 members. The latter developed mainly in districts where Jews carried on an intensive truck gardening in parts of Polesie (near Pinsk and Brzesc) and in the Kolomya district in Galicia. The cooperatives in Terespol and Antopol (near Brzesc) cultivated a special type of cucumber for export. One of the finest of such cooperatives was the *Chema* (Butter) a dairy producers' cooperative in East Galicia. Of the producers' cooperatives especially worthy of notice were three in Miedzyrzec which manufactured bristles, and exported its products to America.

Consumers' cooperatives developed where there were large masses of Jewish industrial workers. The conditions of Jewish economic life in Poland, however, did not favor the extensive development of this type of cooperative and the number of Jewish consumers' cooperatives in Poland amounted only to twenty-nine, with a total membership of 4,000.

An interesting and characteristic example of producers' cooperative undertaking was the Jewish publishing business in Poland. The leading Yiddish and Polish-Jewish newspapers were owned not by private individuals, but by the writers, printers and office workers. This form of ownership enabled the publications to survive crises which would have proved fatal to privately-owned undertakings.

The value of the cooperative movement among the Jews of Poland was not only in its material success and in the part it played in maintaining the economic position of the Jews in the country, but also in its moral effect on the Jewish masses. Thousands of people, without any benefit to themselves, gave of their energy and ability as members of the executive committees and boards of directors of the cooperative banks, and in the course of their activities developed into useful communal workers and leaders in other fields of communal endeavor as well.

The Nazi hordes destroyed and annihilated this splendid structure.

As soon as the Germans entered a town, they simply looted the Jewish banks of any cash and the dossier of notes and obligations would be taken over by the German authorities, who forcibly collected the money for themselves.

Most of the leaders of the cooperative movement were thrown into jail and concentration camps or driven from place to place until they disappeared into "unknown destinations." The buildings of the cooperative banks which were not burned down by the Gestapo were taken over to be used as its offices.

According to the German decree of November 18, 1940, published in *Krakauer Zeitung* (No. 275) the Jewish cooperatives had to be dissolved and their property had to be taken over by the credit Department of the General Government.

This date was the death knell for a splendid achievement which became the pride not only of the Polish Jew but of the world's cooperative movement.

As a matter of fact, in the Ghettos, which were in reality huge concentration camps, the Germans ordered the creation of forced labor units under the name of cooperatives. There were such "cooperatives" of a few thousand tailors in the Warsaw Ghetto, of carpenters in the same Ghetto, and of textile weavers in the Ghetto of Lodz. But of course such units of forced labor, even though hiding under the camouflage of the cooperative name, cannot be coupled with the free, democratic and self-supporting cooperative movement before the war. Therefore any consideration of the success of the Jewish cooperatives in Poland must ignore these spurious contraptions.

But the spirit which began the Jewish cooperative movement in Poland and which was nurtured by it is still alive. Given the opportunity it will play its part in the reconstruction of Polish Jewry when Poland and the rest of the world are free.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

ACCORDING to the last census taken in Poland (1931) the number of Jews engaged in industries and handicrafts both as wage-earners and as independent artisans was 506,700, 45.3% of the total number of gainfully employed Jews. This represented an increase of 66% over the previous census in 1921 when the number of Jews in industries and handicrafts was 305,284, or 36.6% of the total number of gainfully employed Jews.

Of this constantly growing number of Jewish workers, the majority, or 82.8%, were employed in small enterprises where there were no more than four or five employees, including members of the employer's family, and less than 60,000, or 12%, were employed in large and medium enterprises.

Out of 193,185 Jewish manual laborers in 1931 only 3.5% were employed in large enterprises, as against 37.4% Poles; 15% were employed in medium enterprises, as against 20.4% Poles; and 81.5% were employed in smaller enterprises, as against 42.2% Poles. Out of 31,260 Jewish workers in Warsaw only 780, or 2½% worked in larger enterprises, whereas among non-Jews the percentage was ten times greater. In medium-sized industry the percentage of non-Jews was nearly twice that of the Jews.

Jewish workers were employed mostly in the textile, leather and food industries or in personal services, barbers, photographers, and the like. Only a small number were employed in the building, metal and timber industries. The percentage of Jews employed in agriculture in 1931 was only 4.3% as compared with 60.6% non-Jews.

Up to 1915 under the Tzarist regime, trade-unions were illegal in Poland. The first Polish and Jewish trade-unions began to develop in 1915 and 1916 during the first World War. By 1918 thousands of Jewish workers were already organized. In June 1921 the first conference of Jewish trade-unions took place and elected a Trade-Union Council for all of Poland.

In November 1921 the Jewish and Polish trade-unions amalgamated, the Jewish affiliates retaining a certain autonomy, including the right to use the Yiddish language in their activities. A cultural office to carry on organizational and educational work in the Jewish trade-unions was set up as a department of the Council.

Several publications in Yiddish and in Polish were maintained by the Council. Its publication *Der Ruf* (The Call) enjoyed a circulation of 70,000.

In several cities courses were introduced for training members in various skilled crafts.

The Jewish delegates were a considerable force in the craft conventions of the trade-unions. In the garment union the Jews were in the majority, as the garment industry was mostly composed of small enterprises. At times they also formed the majority in the leather union. In the transportation union the Jews constituted 33% to 40% of the membership; in the food union 33%; in the textile union 17% to 20%.

In 1926 a union of Socialist artisans and home workers was formed. Within a short time it numbered 12,000 members in 100 branches.

The Jewish trade-union movement grew rapidly. By 1937 some 72,000 active workers were represented at the Trade Union Congress, and by 1939 the number had increased to 98,810, some of them very young workers whose activities were supervised by a special Youth Division.

The Trade Union Council also carried on wide agitation against anti-Jewish discrimination in employment. It is a sad fact that the number of Jews in heavy industry and in government and public enterprises was insignificant. Out of 191,171 railway employees in 1931 there were only 307 Jews. Out of 69,815 public employees in 1931 there were 1,804 Jews or 2.6% of the total. On April 1, 1926, the Council convened a Labor Congress to fight for the "right to work" in which was enlisted the aid of the Polish Socialist Party, the Polish Trade Unions and the radical Polish intelligentsia. But the results were insignificant.

About 50% of the organized Jewish workers were aligned with the Bund (Jewish Socialist Organization), 30% with the Communists and 20% with the Left Wing Labor Zionists.

Jewish workers, aligned with the Right Wing Labor Zionists, were organized into a separate Central Jewish Trade Union Council. As of July 1, 1939, it numbered 22,925 workers organized in 367 unions, of which 340 unions with a total membership of 16,830 were affiliated

with 11 central offices. 5,600 belonged to Jewish divisions of general Polish craft-unions.

In its report published in August 1939—some twenty days before the outbreak of the war—the Trade Union Council tells of 11 producer's cooperatives employing 400 workers. These cooperatives, created in a period when there was a lack of Jewish capital for the establishment of small business enterprises, succeeded in giving employment to workers in several fields (such as transport workers, bakers, butchers, leather workers and others) whose jobs were constantly endangered by economic crises and the anti-Jewish boycott pursued by certain Polish elements.

In the five years of its existence, from 1934 to 1939, the Council engaged in several other important activities. There was a department for economic activity and social self-help which concerned itself with such matters as medical, legal, producer's cooperatives, credit cooperatives, vocational training and restratification and social security.

The credit cooperatives and the relief funds of the unions began to play an increasingly important part in the life of the unions.

As soon as the Nazis entered Poland both the Jewish and the Polish trade unions were wiped out, their property destroyed or requisitioned and their leaders sent to concentration camps. In many cases the leaders managed to destroy the membership lists so as to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Nazis.

The Jewish workers who survive have now been turned into slaves in labor camps and labor battalions and many of them have been dragged to the marshes of White Russia and the Ukraine or to Germany to share the fate of the rest of the Jewish population.

A number of Jewish workers in 1940 and 1941 were placed by the *Judenrate* in the workshops organized by the Germans in several cities, their remuneration consisting of two plates of thin soup each day and the privilege of buying a pound of bread per week. Working conditions at this so-called "free labor" are hardly better than in the labor camps.

On December 15, 1941, the Nazis ordered that Jews were not to receive any increase in pay for overtime, nor compensation, bonus or any other additional payment. Regulations governing hours, the employment of women and children, etc., were not to apply to Jews. A letter from Warsaw written in the middle of 1942 reveals the existence of illegal trade unions of Jewish workers.

CHAPTER FIVE

JEWISH PIONEERS

THE *Hechalutz* pioneer organization whose purpose it was to prepare Jewish youth for immigration to Palestine, was very active in pre-war Poland. It trained the Jewish youth into productive skilled workers, thus making a great contribution to the development of a Jewish National Home in Palestine.

In the years before the war the Jews in Poland emigrated to Palestine in ever-increasing numbers. In the years 1935 and 1936 out of 47,256 Jews who left Poland, 35,363 or 74.9% went to Palestine. The majority of them had received their vocational training in agriculture, industrial and technical skills in the farms, shops, schools, and other enterprises of the *Hechalutz*.

In 1935 there were in Poland 554 *Hechalutz* collective training farms, employing 18,591 members in factories, lumberyards, quarries, building construction, roadmaking, and as skilled workmen such as carpenters, blacksmiths, electricians, mechanics, tailors, shoemakers, etc.

Sixty auxiliary farms formed a part of the cooperatives. They helped considerably to balance the budget and they gave the *Halutzim* the needed agricultural experience.

With the outbreak of the Arab-Jewish riots in 1937 immigration to Palestine fell off. This was reflected in the general decline of Jewish emigration from Poland, but one-third of the entire Jewish emigration from Poland was still absorbed by Palestine. In 1937 out of a total of 8,856 Jewish emigrants, 2,854 went to Palestine, or 32.2%; in 1938 out of 9,236 emigrants 2,314 went to Palestine or 27.2%.

The *Hechalutz* was the constructive movement among the Polish-Jewish youth. At the outbreak of the war there were about 10,000 members in the training farms of Poland. The various pioneer and Zionist youth organizations, which raised their members in the spirit of the *Hechalutz* movement and in the ideology of the national Jewish renaissance and the rebuilding of Palestine, embraced no less than 100,000 members, and they exercised a dominating influence on the education and character of the growing generation.

Affiliated with the *Hechalutz* was a union of older craftsmen, *Haoved* (the worker), which numbered about 15,000 members.

In 1938 the Nazis began the expulsion of Polish Jews from Germany. In Zbaszyn, a town on the German-Polish frontier, many were interned, among them hundreds of young men. These were absorbed by the *Hechalutz* and many eventually landed in Palestine.

The *Hechalutz* movement came to a halt in the first months of the war. Many of the *Halutzim* went eastward in an attempt to get to Palestine by way of Hungary or Rumania. Many of them perished on the way. About 2,000 flocked to Wilno, which was ceded by the Soviets to Lithuania in 1939. Only half of them succeeded in reaching Palestine. With the outbreak of the Russo-German war, thousands of *Halutzim* from the Eastern provinces were swept along with the powerful torrent of evacuation into deep Russia, the Caucasus, Siberia, and other regions.

Under the Nazi regime in Poland, in 1940-1941, the *Halutzim*, notwithstanding the persecution, began to revive their farms. The large agricultural settlement in Grochow near Warsaw, came to life again in 1940. The President of the Warsaw Kehillah, Adam Czerniakow, who later committed suicide, praised the *Halutzim* highly in an address to them, for their perseverance and courage.

With the establishment of the Warsaw Ghetto in November 1940, all the members of the settlement in Grochow were arrested and transferred into the Ghetto but the *Halutzim* escaped and returned to their farm.

Some time later they were given permission to remain there on condition that they would not leave the premises without special permission, and they were put under strict Nazi control.

A number of farms were started in Bedzin, in upper Silesia, in the vicinity of Lodz, Kielce and other districts. Labor cartels were formed in the larger cities, among them Warsaw, Lodz and Kielce.

The Warsaw *Hechalutz*, with the cooperation of the *Toporol* (Jewish Agriculture Society), sponsored a movement to cultivate war gardens and to utilize every possible patch of soil for the purpose. On the balconies of houses, in yards and on cemeteries vegetables were grown, which augmented to some part the starvation diet of the Jewish population.

The *Halutzim* helped to organize children's "corners," where tens of thousands of children whom the Nazis had driven out of the schools and children's homes, were safe, at least for a few hours daily, from the

chaos of the streets. In 1941 there were 827 such "corners" in Warsaw, with 26,000 children in attendance.

Underground proclamations, pamphlets, and newspapers were published and the *Halutzim* organized country-wide groups for the training of leaders for the movement.

Great heroism was shown by the young girls who played an important part in the work. They would travel on foot over the country, exposed to the danger of being recognized as Jewish and being abused by the Nazis.

Many of the leaders died of typhus, hunger and exposure. We read in a letter which reached the United States in 1940: "Mr. Hunger pays us free visits, and so does Miss Labor Camp." Many were transported to Germany for forced labor.

Some *Halutzim* escaped to Hungary and Slovakia hoping to get to Palestine; most of them were arrested and thrown into concentration camps. In the beginning of 1942 the Grochow farm was finally liquidated and some of the *Halutzim* deported to the Ukraine and to Germany.

A letter signed by a group of young girls describes the depth of despair into which the Jewish youth in Poland was plunged. The letter was brought into the Degania colony in Palestine by two girls, Palestinian citizens, who were among a group exchanged for Germans living in Palestine. It ends as follows:

'You need make no preparations to receive Polish Jews. They will not come. Not one will be left alive.'

Elsewhere the letter says: "Put a small stone or tablet with my name on it in the cemetery in Degania. Let at least my name be there, for I shall not get there."

CHAPTER SIX

EDUCATION

ONE of the proudest achievements of Polish Jewry during the years between the two world wars was the establishment of a large, culturally rich and diversified network of schools. Within this network were schools in which either Hebrew, Yiddish or Polish was the language of instruction, or two of these languages simultaneously. There were schools of orthodox Jews, of "Yiddishists," of assimilationists and of Zionists. Each type of school was tied up with the national, social or religious ideologies dominating the life of Polish Jews. In addition there were many privately owned schools of different types.

This modern school system was a relatively new creation, and it actually originated in the first World War. Two main factors brought about its rise and development; one was a vigorous Jewish national movement, and the other was the Jewish spiritual renaissance that found its expression, among other things, in the establishment of cultural institutions. The rapid advance of the modern Jewish school was due to the new political opportunities which emerged during the first World War after the collapse of the Czarist Empire, which made it necessary to build up a new educational system, to train teachers, and to apply new teaching methods.

The new Jewish schools were not only of immense cultural value; they also became an important political issue. In their struggle for equality, guaranteed to them both by the Versailles Treaty and the Polish Constitution, the Jews demanded the right to establish schools with Hebrew and Yiddish as languages of instruction. This struggle lasted throughout the period between the two World Wars but it never reached its goal—the creation of governmental or government-supported Hebrew or Yiddish schools. The Jews were the only minority in Poland which had to support all its schools by its own resources.

According to official statistics, 425,000 Jewish children received their education in the primary schools: of these, 340,000 in Jewish institutions. In the secondary schools, of the 30,000 Jewish pupils only

about 10,000 received their education in government and municipal schools.

As far as numerical strength was concerned, the orthodox institutions were in the first rank among all the types of Jewish schools. The total number of pupils in the orthodox schools amounted to about 75,000, with about 600 schools and 2,300 teachers. The regular orthodox schools, i.e. primary and secondary, included only about 20,000 pupils. However, besides these regular schools, there were hundreds of special schools, such as *yeshivahs* or *Talmud Torahs* which actually were supplementary institutions to the public schools and whose curriculum comprised only Hebrew and Talmudic subjects. Almost all the pupils of these institutions attended regular public schools as well. In charge of the administration of these schools were two central orthodox organizations, *Horeb* and *Beth Jakow* (for girls).

The large enrollment in the orthodox schools was due to the religious spirit of the Jewish masses and to their familiarity with this type of education for generations back. The teaching in these institutions was based on the principles of the Torah and a strict observance of its precepts. The entire system aimed at the education of a youth devoted to the ideals which dominated orthodox life during the hundreds of years of the Dispersion. The language of instruction was Yiddish, but the entire curriculum was Hebrew, the language of the Torah.

The method of instruction was modelled on old patterns, but was greatly modernized. Most noticeable was the great progress in the education of girls; this, from the orthodox point of view, was a revolutionary step. The first orthodox schools for girls were established in 1917 in Warsaw and in Krakow.

These schools restricted themselves to the Bible and Rabbinical literature. Besides elementary schools, a few secondary schools and seminaries, the orthodox element succeeded in building up the greatest Rabbinical Academy in Europe, the famous academy in Lublin.

At the other extreme were the Yiddish schools, run by their central body Cisho (Central Yiddish School Organization), which severed almost all ties with the traditions of the past and stressed the necessity of a strictly secular education. Its second basic principle was Yiddishism, that is, the recognition of Yiddish as the language of the Jewish people. Yiddish was the chief subject in the educational system in these schools.

The majority of these schools were originally founded as nursery schools. They were regarded as the schools of the workers, though the children of other groups—small traders and artisans—were among the pupils. Socialist ideology played a great part in the educational system.

Foreign literature was taught in Yiddish translation. Hebrew was not a mandatory subject, but was taught in some schools in the higher grades.

The Cisho organization comprised 110 primary schools with 16,000 pupils, a few secondary schools and a teachers' seminary.

In the large group of national Zionist schools were three different types: (1) Schools with Hebrew as the language of instruction under the management of Tarbut, the educational organization; (2) Schools with two languages of instruction, Polish-Hebrew or Yiddish-Hebrew or bi-lingual schools; (3) Schools of the religious Zionists, Mizrachi. The Tarbut schools were established mostly in the Eastern districts of Poland and the educational ideals underlying the Tarbut movement called for the establishment of a Hebrew, modern, secular school system. The network of Tarbut included schools of all types from the lowest to the highest. There were approximately 70 kindergartens, 200 primary schools, 10 high schools and 8 lyceums (university preparatory) with a total of 37,000 pupils. In addition, there were extension courses for adults, and several night schools.

The maintenance of the schools was the duty of the local committees. In these committees the teachers were also represented. Hence there developed types of teachers and active workers with initiative who dealt not only with problems of teaching but with school finance and administration. The parents, too, were closely connected with the schools.

In the case of bi-lingual schools their founders, for practical reasons, advocated the adoption of a second language of instruction besides Hebrew.

The schools of the Hebrew-Polish type greatly outnumbered the Hebrew-Yiddish type. The central organization in charge of the management of these schools was in Lodz. The program was the same as in the government schools, except for 10 to 12 additional hours weekly for Hebraic subjects. Many secondary schools of this type had full rights and their graduates were entitled to admittance to universities equally with the graduates of Government schools. The Central Association of Jewish Schools with headquarters in Lodz embraced about 45 schools, 30 mostly secondary and 4 vocational, with a total of about 12,000 pupils. The bi-lingual Hebrew-Polish schools were known throughout the country for their excellent organization and high pedagogical standards. Both the general and the Hebraic curriculum were on a high level.

The bi-lingual schools of the Hebrew-Yiddish type were managed by the Central Organization, Schulkult. Their aim was to assure a place

for Hebrew alongside of Yiddish. The number of Schulkult schools amounted to 30, mostly primary, with about 6,000 pupils.

The educational institution of the religious Zionists, Mizrachi, may be regarded as a transitional stage from bi-lingualism to the all-Hebrew school. They were supervised by the central organization, Jabneh. The Jabneh schools were strictly religious institutions but fully modernized, both as to the curriculum and educational methods. In the view of their founders, these schools were intended to merge the old traditions of rabbinical education and modern knowledge, and to bridge the gap between them.

In accordance with the ideology which called for diverting Jewish youth from commerce and directing them towards agriculture and handicrafts, the desire and need for professional schools grew steadily stronger. The demand was all the more urgent since an exceedingly small percentage of Jewish children attended vocational, government or municipal schools; as a rule they were not accepted there. Of a total of 91,000 pupils enrolled in all professional schools (government and private) in Poland, about 13,000 (14.2% of the total) were Jews. But only about 1,470 (11.4%) attended government and municipal institutions, whereas about 11,530 or 88.6% were enrolled in the Jewish private schools.

Yet it is to be emphasized that even the private non-Jewish vocational schools were really semi-public, since they received large government subsidies which in some provinces amounted to more than half of the school budget. However, the subsidies of the central government to the Jewish schools were negligible and on the average did not exceed 3% of their budget. Thus the Jewish private trade-schools suffered from severe discrimination. The brunt of the financial burden was borne by the poorer Jewish class, people who were particularly interested in the trade schools but could not afford the payment of the tuition fees.

Three main organizations were in charge of the professional education of Jewish youth in Poland. These organizations were ORT, ICA, and WUZET (Organization for Professional Education in Galicia). The ORT had charge of 15 schools with about 3,000 pupils. There were departments for mechanics, electricians, locksmiths and carpenters. The ICA had 8 professional schools and 12 agricultural and dairy farms; in the farms alone were 1,600 pupils. The ICA also ran special schools for girls, training them in sewing, knitting and related arts. The girls schools were in Krakow, Przemysl and Pinsk. The largest school was in Lwow with about 400 pupils. WUZET maintained a few schools for boys, mainly in the eastern part of Galicia.

A degree of professional training was accorded to the pupils of the different institutions of Centos, the central organization in charge of Jewish orphans.

Aside from these were some professional schools established and owned by local organizations. Many primary and secondary schools for general education belonged to the type of so-called "work-schools." They stressed the need and importance of manual work and devoted a few hours of the weekly curriculum to training in different crafts.

A special type of training for potential emigrants to Palestine was given in the different farms and preparation units (*bachsharab*) of the Zionist pioneer-youth, the *Halutzim*. In these farms and labor units they prepared themselves for agricultural and industrial jobs, which they were expected to assume after their arrival in Palestine.

Within the twenty years between the two wars a great and manifold network of schools was established and developed. Despite bad financial conditions, as well as many legal obstacles, the advance of the schools was rapid and progressive. On the eve of the second World War the great Jewish school system was an important stronghold of education and enlightenment for the Jewish youth in Poland.

Due to the specific cultural and economic conditions prevailing in Poland, the difficulties in getting professional training on a secondary level and the demand of the Jewish youth for higher learning, the number of Jewish students in the Polish universities was relatively high in the first years of the Polish Republic. But in the course of years restrictions on admission of Jewish students grew severer and consequently their number decreased steadily.

Restrictions against Jews in the Polish universities were one of the notorious features of Jewish life in Poland. At first the restrictions were applied mainly in the medical and engineering schools. The Jewish students who were not admitted to these schools either turned to the faculties of law and philosophy, where it was easier to be accepted, or they left the country to continue their studies abroad. Thousands of Polish-Jewish students lived in foreign lands and studied under the most difficult conditions. At one time, in 1929, the number of Jewish students from Poland in foreign universities, particularly in France, Czechoslovakia and Italy totaled about 8,000, while in the same year the number of Jewish students in the Polish universities was 8,700.

In the few years preceding 1939 the number of Jewish students from Poland in foreign universities declined; because of the economic crisis and general poverty the majority of them found it impossible to go abroad. At the same time the application of the *numerus clausus* in

the Polish universities was considerably intensified and was observed even in the law and philosophy faculties. During the academic year 1928-29 the percentage of Jews in the universities was 20.4% of the total, but in 1933-36 it was only 13.2%. The number of Jewish students decreased from 8,700 to 6,200, while the number of Polish students increased from 30,000 to 36,700. In view of increasing discrimination, physical violence and the introduction of the academic Ghetto, the number of Jewish students decreased rapidly in the last years before the outbreak of the war.

A source of great hardships was the question of recognition of foreign diplomas. Those students who managed to graduate abroad and return home faced the greatest difficulties when trying to get recognition. At first each university admitted a limited number of students for recognition every year, but later on the number of recognitions was practically wiped out. Graduates of foreign universities had to wait sometimes as long as five years in order to be admitted to license examinations to practice professions they had studied abroad. Thus the students who were barred from a Polish university by discrimination could no longer find a solution in studying in other lands.

II.

Uncertainty and confusion prevailed as to the plight of the schools in the first days of the German occupation. Rumors were spread that the Germans would allow the opening of all closed institutions except the organizational and professional schools. However, no statement permitting the operation of the schools was issued. Wherever any school was opened it was done merely on the responsibility of the principals and school committees. This occurred for a very brief time in only a few communities. Practically, since the very beginning of German occupation, no normal school work was possible. In some localities no permits for maintaining the schools were granted on the pretext that the danger of typhus and other contagious diseases forbade the assembling of children in classrooms.

In some places the local Jewish community or special school committees managed to establish feeding centers where the children had to appear every day for a meal. In the course of time the school buildings where these feeding centers were set up became regular kitchens for children. But any kind of teaching and educational work was prohibited.

Under these circumstances the teachers and the youth itself resorted

to the establishment of illegal educational courses and circles as the only possible way for continuing educational work. The period of illegal education thus started lasted all the time the Jews were pent up in Ghettos before the mass deportations began. Usually small groups of 4 or 5 children constituted a circle under the leadership of a teacher. Since they were investigated they continually changed their meeting places. The teachers wandered from town to town and established similar circles everywhere. In this way education was given both on primary and secondary school levels and there were even reports that plans for secret college education were prepared.

But it is obvious that despite these efforts, in which both of the teachers and organizers risked their lives, only a small portion of the school youth could benefit by this illegal education. The bulk of the youngsters were deprived of these facilities and were doomed to intellectual and moral decay. Thousands of children loitered around in the streets and in the shattered buildings of the cities and towns for want of schools to attend.

Of course teaching in the secret circles encountered difficulties. There was an almost complete lack of adequate text books. The few books that remained had to be copied, and book copying became a new profession. Some books were so much in use and so worn out that they could not even be copied. For lack of books a sort of oral tradition was revived, and the children learned whole portions of books by heart. In this way, the teaching groups, though they endured immense hardships and privations, still managed to continue their work to an extent.

Vigorous educational work was performed outside of the special illegal circles in all the numerous organizations and units which before the war were the components of the "youth movement." In no country, with the sole exception of Palestine, did youth take such an active part in Jewish special and cultural life as in Poland. The total of Jewish youth, members of all their manifold organizations, amounted before the war to about 300,000. A considerable part of this youth was active in the pioneer or *Halutz* movement.

At the outbreak of the war about 10,000 *Halutzim* got their preparatory training for Palestine in different camps, agricultural farms and *Hachsharab* units. After the collapse of Poland, many *Halutzim* tried to get out of the country, but only a very few of them reached Rumania and finally Palestine. A slightly larger number managed to escape to Wilno.

The great majority who remained in the country resumed their normal activities. The *Halutzim* of Grochow near Warsaw, the largest

pioneer farm in Poland, continued their work. When the Ghetto was established in Warsaw they were forced to live within its limits, but for a few hours daily they were permitted to leave for work on the farm. At the same time those *Halutzim* who formerly had their training units in the cities resumed their work. Special workshops to train *Halutzim* in various branches of handicraft were established. There were reports of meetings and conferences of various groups of *Halutzim*. A special bulletin *Iton Hinuchi* (Journal of Our Education) was issued. But more than that, the *Halutzim* carried out a very important educational work; they took care of the children who were deprived of their schools.

The Palestine ideal was deeply rooted and lived vividly in the souls of the pioneers. Palestinian customs were observed and the many ties with Palestine were strengthened. Out of love and yearning many risked the very dangerous journey to Palestine, but most were arrested in Slovakia.

Thus for a time the work of the young people went on and was carried out with the same lofty devotion, idealism and self-sacrificing characteristics of pre-war times. They stood at their posts as long as was humanly possible. The ruthless oppressors put an end to their heroic efforts only when they put an end to their lives.

JEWISH SCIENCE IN POLAND

THE sixteenth century saw the beginning of the glorious period of Polish Jewry. Poland became the greatest center of Jewish learning in the world, and the greatest rabbis and scholars in Western and Southern Europe sent their sons to study at the Polish *yeshivas* (religious seminaries). The most ancient type of higher institution for Jewish learning is the *yeshivah*, first known in Palestine and Mesopotamia some 2,000 years ago. The *yeshivah* is primarily an academy for the study of the Talmud and Talmudic commentaries; during the centuries, they have undergone many changes and differ from each other in approach and method.

Krakow, Lwow and Lublin were not only centers of learning for Poland, but for the whole Jewish world. The founder of the Krakow *yeshivah* was Rabbi Joseph Polak. He was followed by the famous Talmudic scholar, Rabbi Moses Isserles (1530-1572), known as Rama. In Lwow the head of the academy for forty-two years was the famous Talmudic scholar, Rabbi Kalman Wermaisa, (died in 1560). In Lublin the head of the *yeshivah* was the famous scholar Rabbi Solomon Lurie (1510-1574), known as Rashal or Maharshal. Later, the disciples of these great teachers established new centers of learning in Wilno, Grodno, Brzesc, Ostrog Wolynski and other places.

Nearer to our age were the great scholars of the 18th century: Rabbi Akiba Eiger of Posnan; Rabbi Elijah, the famous Gaon of Wilno; his disciple Rabbi Chaim of Wolozyn; Rabbi Joseph Saul Natanson of Lwow and a long list of their successors.

With the rise of the so-called *Wissenschaft des Judentums* or Jewish science i.e., the study of Jewish history and Jewish cultural values according to scientific methods, Polish Jewry was in the forefront. Among the founders of Jewish science were Rabbi Solomon Rappoport of Tarnopol, Rabbi Nachman Krochmal and Rabbi Zwi Hirsch Chajes of Zolkiew. In Germany, the center of the new science, a large number of its exponents, perhaps even the majority, were Polish Jews or Jews of Polish extraction. Equipped with ample knowledge of Jewish lore

in accordance with the Polish-Jewish tradition, they were in a position to make the most valuable contributions to Jewish science.

The famous *yeshivahs* in Poland included the one in Mir founded 120 years ago and which had 500 students from many parts of the world; in Kamieniec Litewski under the leadership of the late Rabbi Baruch Dow Leibowitz; in Kleck, under the leadership of Rabbi Aaron Kotler; in Baranowicze under the leadership of Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman; in Radun, under the leadership of Rabbi Israel Meir Kagan who died in 1933, author of the work *Chafetz Chaim* (The Will of Life) by which he became known throughout the Jewish world, and of *Mishna Barura*, the most recent and authoritative commentary on the *Shulhan-Aruch*; in Bialystok under the leadership of Rabbi Abraham Joffen. Some cities had more than one *yeshivah*; there were several in Warsaw and several in Lodz. In Warsaw there was the great *Metibitha* Institute, headed by Rabbi Solomon Joskowitz, which had 400 students, the *yeshivah* Torath Chaim headed by Rabbi Zwi Dow Glickman, the *yeshivah* Beth Samuel headed by Rabbi Reif, and several others.

The largest and most famous of the modern Polish *yeshivahs* was in Lublin; *Yeshivah Hachmai Lublin* (The Academy of Learned Men of Lublin). It was founded in 1927 by Rabbi Meir Shapiro of that city. It occupied a six-story building containing 120 rooms, including large auditoriums, lecture halls and dormitory, and a library of Talmudic literature of some 40,000 volumes. Among the 300 students of the *yeshivah* were young Jews from all over the world. After the death of its founder in 1934, it was headed by two famous scholars, Rabbi Aryah Fromer and Rabbi Mozes Friedman.

All these *yeshivahs*, both in Lublin and in the eastern provinces such as Mir, Kamieniec, Baranowicze, as well as those in Warsaw and other cities had hundreds of students from all parts of Poland and from other countries as well. There were students from Germany, England, Holland, Belgium and even the United States. Many of the orthodox rabbis in America received their training in the Polish *yeshivahs*.

When the war broke out, nearly all the *yeshivahs* in the Eastern provinces of Poland moved to Wilno and the surrounding towns occupied by Lithuania. After a few months, that center also collapsed as a result of the political changes in Lithuania. Some of the many hundreds of students and teachers emigrated. The entire *yeshivah* of Mir, after long wanderings, reached Shanghai. Some are in Russia (in Siberia or Kazackstan). But the largest part remained in the Wilno

district where the Nazis began to persecute them as soon as they entered. According to reports arriving from there, the Nazis accused the Talmudic students of witchcraft and condemned them to be burned alive. According to the same reports the Archbishop of Wilno, Jabrzykowski, excommunicated from the Church Christian witnesses who supported the monstrous accusation.

The Lublin *yeshivah* with its splendid edifice and equipment drew the special attention of the Nazis, who marked it for destruction. Immediately after the occupation of Lublin they installed a military hospital in the building. Later the Gestapo took it over. The books of the library were sold at auction or burned.

The *Deutsche Jugendzeitung* early in 1940 gives a vivid account of the deliberate vandalism perpetrated on the Lublin *yeshivah*: "It was a matter of especial pride to us," the Nazi narrator says, "to destroy the Talmudic academy, known as the largest in Poland. We threw out on the street the large Talmudic library and took it to the market-place. There we set fire to the books. The conflagration lasted for twenty hours. The Jews of Lublin stood around weeping bitterly, their shrill cries nearly drowning our voices. We then called a military orchestra and the joyous cries of the soldiers drowned out the sound of Jewish wailing."

But in spite of the destruction of that building and of others belonging to Polish *yeshivahs*, the study of the Torah did not cease. Reports reaching us in the years 1940-41 tell of clandestine study in small prayer-houses and in private homes where young Jews gathered to carry on the thousand-year-old tradition of Talmudic learning.

Among the important modern institutions of Jewish science in Poland were: The Institute for the Science of Judaism in Warsaw, the Jewish Scientific Institute in Wilno, and the famous libraries of Judaica in Warsaw, Wilno, Krakow and Lwow.

The Institute for the Science of Judaism in Warsaw was in the nature of a university. It included the following departments: 1) Bible and Semitic Languages (headed by Professor Moses Schorr, who met his tragic end in Russia); 2) Jewish History (headed by Professor Meir Balaban, who perished while being deported by the Nazis from the Warsaw Ghetto); 3) Hellenistic Studies and Midrash (headed by Professor Edmund Stein); 4) Philosophy of Religion (headed by Dr. Abraham Heschel, now in the U. S. A.); 5) Talmud, Talmudic Archeology and Rabbinical Literature (headed by Dr. Abraham Weiss, now in the U. S. A.); 6) Sociology, Demography and Statistics (headed by Dr. Arieh Tartakower, now in the U. S. A.); 7) Homiletics (headed

by Dr. Marcus Braude, now in Palestine); 8) Hebrew Literature (headed by Dr. Israel Osterstetzer, now in Russia). The students of the Institute, numbering nearly 150, represented the elite of the Jewish student youth in Poland; admission to the Institute was open to those who had, besides general academic qualifications, a good Jewish schooling which study at the Institute expanded and perfected.

The Institute published several scientific works by its lecturers and other scholars, e.g. *The Antiquities of the Jews in Poland* by Professor Balaban; *Philo of Alexandria* by Professor Stein; *The Participation of the Jews in the November Insurrection of 1831* by Dr. Ignacy Schipper; three books on the history of the origin of the Talmud by Professor Abraham Weiss. Two books were published on special occasions containing rich scientific material; one on the sixtieth birthday of Rabbi Marcus Braude, the other on the sixtieth birthday of Professor Moses Schorr. A third publication in honor of Professor Balaban was almost completed when the war broke out. Various works of research by the students of the Institute were printed in periodicals such as the Jewish Monthly, *Miesięcznik Żydowski*, *The Young Historian* and others.

The Institute had a library consisting mainly of Talmudic and Rabbinical works, including many rare prints dating from the 16th and 17th centuries.

A few days after the occupation of Warsaw the Gestapo took away the archives of the Institute. A few weeks later the entire library of the Institute was seized.

Apparently the Institute library shared the fate of the large library of the Tlumacka Street Synagogue. The latter, the largest Jewish library in Poland, was situated in a modern building erected at enormous expense shortly before the war and was especially valuable for its numerous incunabula and rare manuscripts, including the only copy in the world of the so-called *Talmud Yerushalmi*, part *Kodoshim*. The Institute was situated in the same building as the Synagogue library on Tlumacka Street. Tens of trucks arrived near the building and emptied it of all books.

The famous Strashun Library in Wilno was burned by the Nazi vandals after they occupied the city in June 1941. What happened to other large Jewish libraries in Lwow, Krakow and other cities is not known.

The famous Berson Museum of Jewish Antiquities of the Warsaw Jewish Community was taken away to Germany. The Museum had many valuable manuscripts, including the only piece of writing extant in the hand of the false Messiah, Jacob Frank.

The Yiddish Scientific Institute (known as YIVO) in Wilno was a large institution of research devoted to the study of the Yiddish language, and also to folklore, Jewish history and Judaica in general. It was founded in the year 1925 and developed very rapidly. It had a building of its own in which there were rich collections of Jewish folklore, philologic source material, material on the Jewish theatre, a large number of manuscripts etc. The YIVO published several scientific volumes on the Yiddish language and several important periodicals. It trained young scientific workers and enabled them to study by providing stipends and fellowships.

The activities of the YIVO continued until July 1941, when the Nazis occupied Wilno. Neither the Lithuanian government nor the Soviets, which were in control in Wilno until the time of the Russian-German war, had put any obstacles in its way. The Nazis burned the library and destroyed the Institute.

In 1920 the Miztachi in Poland established an institution of higher learning under the name of Tahkemoni, which combined the main characteristics of the *yeshivah* and of the modern scientific institute of learning. The curriculum of Tahkemoni was designed for the training of fully qualified rabbis. Talmud, Jewish Law, Bible, Jewish history and Hebrew language were taught extensively and at the same time the students received the equivalent of a secondary school education. The Institute had a dormitory for students from the province. About 250 pupils studied at Tahkemoni. The teaching personnel was well qualified to prepare orthodox rabbis with a modern education. Among the prominent rabbis who lectured at Tahkemoni was Rabbi Jechiel Meir Blumenfeld, the publisher of the journal *Jerusalem*, devoted to the study of the Torah. Its first principal was Professor Meir Balaban; the second, until the outbreak of the war, Dr. Moses Alter. Of the hundreds of graduates of the establishment many occupied important rabbinical posts in Poland. The building of Tahkemoni was destroyed during the siege of Warsaw in September 1939. A German bomb fell into the building destroying it completely. The archives, the library, and the entire dormitory were burned down. The students and the teachers fled.

Another large institution of learning in Poland was the Seminary for Teachers of Jewish Religion in Warsaw, under the direction of the well-known Jewish scholar, Dr. Moses Tauber who was killed by the Germans. This seminary provided all public schools in Poland with skilled modern teachers of Jewish religion. There was also a Seminary

for Hebrew teachers in Wilno under the direction of Samuel Bernholz and Dr. N. Amarant.

The Teachers' Seminary of Wilno, affiliated with the Central Organization of Tarbut in Poland, had 300 students. The degrees it awarded were recognized by the Polish Government. Its graduates became teachers in Hebrew schools not only in Poland but also in other countries. Many teachers of public schools in Palestine and in the United States were its graduates. The Seminary was very well equipped. It had an extensive library, laboratories and workshops, in addition to an experimental Hebrew School.

CHAPTER EIGHT

POLAND AS THE CENTER OF HEBREW LITERATURE

IN APPRAISING the general destruction wrought by Hitlerism on Polish Jewry, a destruction which is already beyond repair, one must dwell particularly on the significance of Poland as a center of Hebrew culture.

The production of books and their distribution are the mark of the cultural level of a people or a group. Printing shops and publishing houses can originate only where there is a demand for books and where a creative process goes on. In 1534 the three brothers Samuel, Asher and Eliakum Halycz founded the first Hebrew printing press in Poland, in the city of Krakow. Efforts to establish printing presses had been made before then, but permission was denied. In 1550 a Hebrew printing press was founded at Lublin. Thus, Krakow and Lublin were the first cities in Poland to have their own Hebrew printing establishments. The books they produced, especially the Krakow editions, were well-designed and embellished with fine drawings. The two printing shops published hundreds of Hebrew books, including those originally written by Polish rabbis and reprints of old books. Apart from all kinds of prayer-books, Bibles, books of the Pentateuch and of the Mishna and Talmud, the reprints included several other important and scholarly works.

Besides books on Talmudic law, a large literature was created expounding the Bible by commentaries and by popular homiletics, the latter containing rich information on Jewish life in Poland during that period.

The massacres against Jews in the seventeenth century (1648-9) brought great ruin to Polish Jewry, entire Jewish communities, especially in Southeast Poland, being destroyed by the Ukrainian Cossacks who revolted against the Poles under their leader, Bohdan Chmelnicki. The effects of the massacres were felt for a long time, and several centers of learning ceased to exist for several generations. Nevertheless Jewish cultural activity did not cease and the study of the Torah in Poland pro-

ceeded more extensively than in any other country, while Poland continued to occupy first place in the production of Hebrew books.

In 1690 a Hebrew printing press was established in Zolkiew by Uri Ferwel Halewi; later more printing establishments were added in the same town. In the eighteenth century there was a large number of printing houses in Poland producing Hebrew books in the hundreds of thousands of copies. The scholar was honored and occupied first place in Jewish society; the main characteristic of Polish Jewry was its love for Jewish learning. The bookcase was the ornament of the Jewish house, even the poor artisan who was not a scholar or who could not afford to buy a glass-enclosed bookcase for his books had several shelves in his house filled with Hebrew volumes. These were not only various prayer-books but usually also a set of the Pentateuch, a set of the Mishna (code of Jewish lore compiled in the 2nd century) volumes, and others. A Jewish house without a few books could no more be imagined than one without a *mezuzah* at the door-post.

After the spread of Hassidism in Poland a rich Hassidic literature sprang up in its many branches: expositions of the Bible in the spirit of the new movement, theoretical discussions on Hassidism and various stories and legends about Hassidic saints. Many tens of thousands of such books were printed and sold. The Hassidic story-books served as a folklore literature in the fullest sense of the term. As a result of Hassidic influence, there developed a demand for books on Kabbala, and many such volumes were printed.

In the nineteenth century there were in Poland many large Hebrew printing establishments, highly developed technically, which served not only Polish Jewry, but the Jewries of other countries as well. Thus Lwow, where the first Hebrew printing house was founded in 1752, became the center for the distribution of Hebrew books in the Balkans. The famous Balaban printing firm, founded by Rabbi Judah-Leib Balaban in 1830, made new reprints of the four parts of the *Shulchan-Aruch* (a code of Jewish law written in the 15th century), of the Pentateuch and of the well-known religious guide-book *Hok le-Israel* which were widely distributed. In 1803 the Rom printing firm in Wilno was founded, first under the name of Menachem Rom, later as "The House of the Widow and the Brothers Rom," which published the famous Wilno Talmud editions. Later other printing establishments opened in Wilno; Matz, Rosenkrantz and Schriftsetzer, and others. In the 19th century Warsaw had large Jewish printing houses of Lewin, Epstein, Szulberg and others. Many of them existed up to the outbreak of the present war. Also Piotrkow had large Jewish printing houses, among

them Belchatowski, established in 1880, in which hundreds of books were printed.

The general production of Hebrew books in Poland during the present century amounted to several hundreds of thousands of copies every year, as high as a quarter of a million in some years, including prayer-books, the Bible, the *Talmud*, Talmudic commentaries and treatises on Talmudic law, religio-ethical books, homiletic books, and modern Hebrew literature.

Poland also had a large number of scribes who wrote by hand, according to the prescribed tradition, parchment scrolls of the Five Books of Moses, the Book of Esther and the scrolls placed inside the phylacteries and on the door-posts, *mezuzas*. Many of them were skilled craftsmen in the art of writing on parchment with the goose-quill. In one district, Slonim-Baranowicze, there were before the outbreak of the war some three hundred scribes who specialized in writing scrolls of the Five Books only for export, mainly to the United States. Nearly all scrolls used in American synagogues were written in Poland.

Every synagogue and small prayer-house in Poland had well-filled bookshelves. They served as folk libraries on a very large scale. Besides, there were the large libraries of the *yeshivas*, many containing rare antiques. All of these now have been destroyed. At a conservative estimate, not counting the numbers of books in the hands of private individuals and of booksellers, and allowing for a number of books saved from destruction, there were in the prayer-houses of Poland alone some two million volumes, collected over a period of many generations, piously cherished and loved by the spiritually-strongest Jewish community in the world, which were desecrated and burned by the Nazi vandals.

The contributions of Polish Jewry in the field of modern Hebrew literature, too, are of first-rate significance.

The history of modern Hebrew literature begins in the second half of the eighteenth century when the first Hebrew literary periodical, *Hameassef*, (Almanac) appeared in Berlin in 1784. This periodical could not have existed without the collaboration of Polish Jews. The teacher of the famous Jewish philosopher and reformer Moses Mendelsohn was Rabbi Israel Zamosc, a Polish Jew. Mendelsohn's collaborators in the writing of his Commentary on the Bible were Polish Jews; Rabbi Solomon Dubner, Rabbi Sholom of Miedzyrzec, Herz Homberg, Aaron Jaroslaw (Friedentahl), Isaac Satanow, and Menachem-Mendel Lapin. The central figure in the *Haskalah* (Enlightenment) movement

of those days, Naftali Herz Weisel (or Wesley), was of Polish antecedents. The great Jewish philosopher of that epoch, Solomon Maimon, was a Polish Jew. Without the collaboration of Polish Jews neither *Hameassef* nor Mendelsohn's *Biur* (Commentary of the Bible) would have been possible. At the time that *Haskalah* was being preached in Berlin, where no scientific work in Hebrew had been produced except for the Hebrew Grammar by the Polish Jew, Ben-Zeev, a great Talmudic scholar, a rabbi in the small towns of Szczebrzeszyn and Bodzanow, Rabbi Juda-Leib Margolies, wrote a book on natural science in Hebrew, (*Or Olam*—the Light of the World—published in Nowy Dwor, 1783), and the Gaon of Wilno influenced his contemporaries in the direction of *Haskalah* perhaps no less than the leaders of the movement in Berlin. Incidentally, the Gaon himself wrote a text-book in Hebrew on mathematics, while his disciple, Rabbi Baruch of Szklow, wrote in Hebrew, books on medicine, astronomy, and mathematics, besides a medical Hebrew-Latin lexicon.

In 1820 the Hebrew poet and scholar Sholom ha-Cohen (1772-1845), a native of Miedzyrzec, Poland went to Vienna where he began publishing the periodical *Bikkurei-ha-Ittim* (First Harvest). It is at that time that the so-called "Galician" period of *Haskalah* in Hebrew literature begins. From then on Poland has always been the center of Hebrew culture. Names of the towns may have changed but the center of Hebrew creativity, of printing and distributing Hebrew books, was Poland.

The Galician period produced the greatest Jewish thinker of modern history, the father of the philosophy of Jewish history, Nachman Krochmal; the creator of Judaica or Jewish Science in Hebrew, Solomon-Judah Rappoport; the first Hebrew satirist, Dr. Isaac Erter; the Hebrew poet, Meir Letteris, who translated many poems from European languages into Hebrew, including the first part of *Faust* (1865). The first to attempt original stories in Hebrew was Joseph Perl of Tarnopol. The first book on geography in Hebrew was written by Samson Bloch (born in Kulikow) and was published in Zolkiew in 1822 under the name of *Shevilei Olam* (Paths of the World).

In the nineteenth century a new center arose in Wilno where the great poet Adam ha-Cohen Levenson and his son Michael lived. There also lived the Hebrew writer and translator Kalman Schulman, the originator of modern Hebrew prose; Mordecai-Aaron Ginzburg who in 1822 published an account of the discovery of America, and many other well-known writers. All their works, cornerstones of modern Hebrew literature, were printed in Poland and distributed in thousands of copies.

The elder Levenson also reprinted Mendelsohn's Bible Commentary with the text of the Bible. It was also in Wilno that the greatest Hebrew poet of his age, Judah-Leib Gordon (1830-1892), was born and received his training.

Southeast Poland, known as Volynia, also was the home of Hebrew cultural figures, among them the great Hebrew writer and scholar, Isaac Ber Levinson of Krzemieniec (1788-1860), whose refutation of the ritual blood libel was translated into English.

In Warsaw lived the naturalist and mathematician Chaim-Zelig Slonimski (1810-1904), the popularizer of science among Polish Jews and the author of numerous books and articles read by tens of thousands of Jews in Poland. Slonimski was the founder of *Hatzefira* (Dawn) (Warsaw, 1862), which was at first a popular science journal but which, after Nachum Sokolow assumed its editorship, became a political and literary medium. Sokolow's mastery of the Hebrew language, his brilliant political reviews and *feuilletons* attracted a large circulation to the newspaper. When *Hatzefira* was converted into a daily, the best Hebrew writers were grouped around it. Warsaw became an important center of the Hebrew literature and press. New periodicals were started. Sokolow published *Haasif* (Harvest) and later his famous Yearbooks, *Sefer Hashana*.

Early in the 'eighties there was started in Warsaw, as in many other towns and cities of Poland, the Society of Lovers of the Hebrew Language, *Hovevei Sefath Ever*, which carried on an extensive cultural activity, organizing meetings and discussions in the Hebrew language, Hebrew libraries, courses in Hebrew, etc. When the war broke out the large Hebrew library founded by the Society and later renamed *Ivriah* was still in existence. It was under the control of the *Tarbut*, organization which in the past two or three decades concentrated all activities connected with advancing the knowledge of Hebrew in Poland.

Up to the end of the nineteenth century every writer had to print his books at his own expense. The first Hebrew publishing firm was established by A. Shalkowitch, known by his Hebrew pen-name of Ben Avigdor. In 1891 he founded the Hebrew penny books (*Sifrei-Agora*), publishing various stories in Hebrew in pocket editions. In 1897 he founded in Warsaw the Tushia Publishing House, which immediately launched on the ambitious project of publishing the Great Library, *Bibliotheka Gedola*, consisting of 200 titles. The contributions of the Tushia Publishing House to the development of Hebrew literature were immense. Both Bialik and Tchernichowsky, the two greatest modern Hebrew poets, first published their collected poems through the Tushia;

it also published David Frishman's excellent translations of Byron's *Cain*.

In 1893 the Society of *Achiassaf* was founded in Warsaw by the great Hebrew thinker and essayist Achad-Haam, marking another important milestone in the growth of Hebrew publishing. Besides its yearbooks, the famous *Achiassaf* almanacs, the society also published the leading Hebrew periodical of its day, the monthly *Hashiloach*, and numerous Hebrew books. The society existed until the war broke out.

The Hebrew dailies, *Hatzefira* and *Hazeman*, also developed publishing activities on a large scale. Entire libraries could be bought by the readers of these dailies in the forms of premiums and prizes. In this manner the publishing establishments of *Tevuna* and *Hazeman* originated.

Among the Hebrew books published in Poland were the works of the medieval Hebrew writers Judah Halevi, Ibn Ezra, Alharizi, and others. Graetz's *History of the Jews* was translated into Hebrew by Saul Pinchas Rabinowicz and distributed in enormous quantities. A few years before the war a new translation of the same work was made by S. L. Zitron, F. Lachower, and Dr. A. S. Kaminiecki. A new edition of Maimonides's *Guide to the Perplexed* was published according to Alharizi's translations with notes by Dr. Scheuer. A complete collection was published by Samuel David Luzzato's works; the monumental work of Isaac Hirsch Weiss, *Dor-Dor ve-Doreshav*, (a history of Jewish exegesis) in five volumes was published, and, finally, numerous books by the most modern of Hebrew writers.

Until the outbreak of the First World War Warsaw was the main center of Hebrew literature in the world. The three great masters of modern Hebrew, Sokolow, Peretz and Frischman, lived there, all of them contributing to the revival and the flowering of Hebrew literature both by their original writings and by the influence they exerted on others. Modern Hebrew journalism was created by Sokolow, the European *feuilleton* and modern European criticism were introduced into Hebrew by Frischman, and the feeling for richness and symbolism by Peretz. The best translations from world literature into Hebrew were made by Frischman, and Bialik, too, wrote some of his best works while living in Warsaw.

After the First World War an intensive activity began to foster Hebrew culture in Poland. An extensive school system grew up, hundreds of evening courses for adults were organized. All of this activity was carried on by the *Tarbut* organization. Many Hebrew books were published and a new branch of the Hebrew book industry published

Hebrew text-books for schools, both for Jewish and general subjects. A new children's literature was developed and periodicals for children were published.

A new chapter in the story of the publishing of Hebrew books not only in Poland but in the world generally, opened with the transfer of the Szybel Publishing House to Warsaw. Abraham Joseph Szybel, a Polish Jew, now living in the United States, was the Maecenas of Hebrew literature. In Moscow in 1917 he had begun the publication of the *Hatekufa* (Era), under the editorship of David Frischmann. He moved to Poland after the Bolshevik Revolution, resuming the publication of *Hatekufa* under Frischmann's editorship and founded his publishing house. The *Hatekufa* was the first Hebrew quarterly of large scope. It contained departments for original *belles-lettres*, for translations, for research and for literary criticism. The Szybel Publishing House printed numerous original Hebrew works and translations from world literature. A mere mention of some of the translations will give an idea of its achievements: from the Greek and Latin—Homer, Anacreon's lyrics, Plato and Josephus Flavius, from the English—Shakespeare, Byron, Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde, Rabindranath Tagore, Thomas Carlyle, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Longfellow; from the French—Victor Hugo, Emile Zola, Anatole France, Romain Rolland and Hippolyte Taine; from the German—Goethe, Friedrich Hebbel, Heinrich Heine, Gerhardt Hauptmann, Jakob Wasserman and Bernhard Kellerman; from the Scandinavian languages—Henrik Ibsen, Hans Peter Jacobsen and Knut Hamsun; from the Russian—Pushkin, Tolstoy and Dostoyevski; from the Polish—Adam Mickiewicz and Sienkiewicz, etc. These are but a fraction of the translations published by Szybel. Most of the translations into Hebrew were made by Polish Jews.

Besides the Szybel Publishing House, which was a non-profit organization, there were several other communal and private undertakings, proof of the large market for Hebrew books in Poland.

Other Hebrew cultural activities in Poland were carried on through dramatic studios. The Hebrew dramatic studio in Wilno, founded in 1928 gave a number of successful performances in Warsaw. *The Cricket on the Hearth* by Dickens and *The Golden Chain*, by Peretz, performed by the Wilno studio, were highly praised. In Lodz, for a few years in succession, the Hebrew studio was under the direction of the first-rate artist, and founder of the Palestine Theatre, Madame Bernstein Cohen.

There were in Poland several Hebrew People's Universities in Warsaw, Wilno and Lodz, each of which had hundreds of regular students.

The Wilno Hebrew People's university normally functioned all year round, except for the summer months. Hebrew lectures, discussions and recitations were attended by large crowds even in the provincial towns. Many towns in Poland had Hebrew clubs. The Warsaw *Moadon Ivri* (Hebrew Club) drew capacity audiences every Saturday afternoon, especially at the lectures on the Bible.

The associations of Hebrew writers (especially in Wilno and in Warsaw) and the Hebrew Pen Club in Warsaw engaged in cultural activities also. The evenings of the Warsaw Pen Club were noted for their high level.

During the last years before the outbreak of the present war many Hebrew writers began emigrating from Poland to Palestine, which became the center of the modern Hebrew book industry. But Poland still remained the chief center for Hebrew religious literature.

In the ten years preceding the outbreak of the present war the best text-books for the Hebrew language, the Bible and Jewish history were published in Poland. S. I. Gordon's *Modern Commentary on the Bible*, the outstanding book in its field, was written and published in Poland, as was Jerachmiel Weingarten's abridged Pentateuch for children. Weingarten's Hebrew readers for the elementary schools are of exceptionally high merit. The same can be said of his text-book on Jewish history. Excellent Hebrew readers were also published by the *Tarbut* Society and Raphael Guttman published text-books for all grades of the elementary school, including his excellent reader for the first year, under the pen-name Levavi. In the field of Hebrew school-books Poland outstripped Palestine, and many Hebrew schools in Palestine used text-books published in Poland.

Many Hebrew text-books were also published on general subjects, such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, natural history, geography, etc. which served the Hebrew schools not only in Poland but in other countries as well.

Up to the outbreak of the present war the Hebrew writers in Poland continued the glorious tradition of Polish Jewry. Of their fate under Nazi occupation, little is known. Those who perished at the hands of the Nazi invader include Chaim-Isaac Bunin, one of the greatest authorities on *Hassidism*; the renowned writer Hillel Zeitlin; the poet Isaac Kacnelenson; Rabbi Isaac Nissenbaum, and many others.

The approximately one-hundred printing plants in Poland in which Hebrew books were printed were looted by the Nazis. The libraries of the Hebrew schools, totalling approximately 250,000 volumes, were put

to the torch. The books in the private and communal libraries, aggregating an even larger number, including the famous Straszun library in Wilno, also went up in flames.

Only ashes remain where once stood the proud center of Hebrew culture.

THE HOME OF YIDDISH BOOKS

OF THE three main centers of Yiddish literature, Poland, Russia and America, which before the war vied with one another for first place, Poland was the recognized home of the Jewish book industry. The intense and pulsating Jewish life of the country furnished a favorable *milieu* for a thriving Jewish literature. There was an abundance of writers as well as of readers. There creative writing in Yiddish had its natural roots and its freest influence.

Already by the end of the 16th century Polish Jewry had achieved a position of leadership in the Jewish spiritual life of Europe as well as in the newly-created Yiddish literature. During those years Poland lived through the "golden era" of Jewish spiritual achievement which left its mark on the entire future development of Yiddish literature, bringing it closer to its natural origins—the traditional Hebrew literature.

One of the first and most widely read books in Poland in Yiddish was the *Zeinu V' reinu* by Jacob Ben Isaac Ashkenasi of Janow. This free and informal retelling of the Pentateuch was a unique work which exercised an influence on many forms of Yiddish literature up to modern times. According to the article on Yiddish literature in the *Yiddish Encyclopedia*, among the first chronicles in Yiddish was the anonymous translation of *Shevet Yehuda*, the Tribe of Judah, which was issued in Krakow in 1591. A fantastic travel book, *Galilut Erez Yisroel* (The Regions of Palestine), by Gershon Eliazar Halewi was published in Lublin in 1635. Among the first works of a social or polemical character was *Ashkenaz und Polak* (German and Polish Jew), in the latter part of the 17th century and which enjoyed great popularity. The work criticized the attitude of Germans towards the Polish Jews who fled there to escape the Cossack pogroms of 1648-1649.

The *Wonder-Tales* of Reb Nachman Braslawer were printed chiefly in Lwow, Warsaw and Lublin, and were the inspiration for a new type of narrative literature in Yiddish. Also the first Haskalah (Enlightenment) work in Yiddish, *Sefer Refuout* (Book of Remedies), by Dr. Moshe Markuze was published in 1789. In addition to being a book of

remedies it was a kind of encyclopedia of Polish-Jewish customs and Polish-Jewish problems of the time. Mention should also be made of the first book to be translated from Polish into Yiddish, an anonymous work entitled *The French Invasion of Russia*, published in Wilno in 1813. The first Yiddish translation of *Robinson Crusoe* appeared in Galicia in the 1820's and in Wilno in 1830.

In 1826 a Polish-Jewish dictionary was published in Wilno. Its author was Arieh Leib Leon D'or, who was also probably the author of the original and profuse Yiddish *Briefenshteller* (Letter-writer), which was published anonymously in Wilno and Grodno in 1825.

The first writer in Yiddish whose object in writing was literary rather than didactic was Dr. Solomon Ettinger, who was born in Warsaw in 1800 and died in Zamosc in 1856. He was the forerunner of the "grandfather" of Yiddish literature, Mendele Mocher Seforim and other of the later writers who sought to create a Yiddish literature, not merely to use Yiddish as a medium for enlightenment.

Isaac Meir Dick was the first to publish Yiddish story books. Others quickly followed, publishing their books in Warsaw, among them Hirsch Gedaliah Belew with three books published between 1857 and 1859; Avigdor Bruchia Ruff with one book published in 1857, etc. Great influence was exerted by the Warsaw *Yiddisher Zeitung* published in 1867, which not only published the works of the Yiddish writers of Poland of the time, but also the work of the writers of all the European centers which had become the centers of modern European literature.

The first work of Mendele Mocher Seforim, the "grandfather" of Yiddish literature was published in Poland. In 1873 his *Die Kliatsche* (The Nag) was published in Wilno, and in 1878 his *Kitzur Maso's Byniomin Hasblishi* (The Wanderings of Benjamin the Third) was also published in Wilno. At the same time Jacob Dinenson, folk-lorist and novelist, became popular in Warsaw and in Wilno.

Around this literary center headed by Dinenson were grouped the most distinguished Yiddish writers of the time in Eastern Europe. Among works that emerged from that group were Mordecai Spector's anthology *Hoize Freind* (Home Companion), published in Warsaw in 1888-1896; *Yiddishes Folksblat* (Jewish Folk Magazine), published from 1881 to 1890. Spector's *Hoize Freind* was the first to go in for literary criticism, research in Yiddish language and folklore, publishing the first articles to be written in these fields in Yiddish.

From the young literary generation which gathered around the famous poet and dramatist, Isaac Leib Peretz in Warsaw, emerged the great names of Yiddish literature: Yehoash, Avram Raisin, David

Pinski, Solom Ash, H. D. Nomberg, B. Gorin, and M. Boraisha. Later appeared an entire flood of new writers who were either completely trained in Poland or whose first works were printed in the literary journals of Warsaw and Wilno.

Jewish literature in Poland experienced a notable development and blossoming, and Warsaw was the main center of the renaissance of Jewish folk-creativity. Jewish book-publishing firms in Warsaw and Wilno began to flourish. The Wilno publishing firm of B. Kleckin, before the First World War, issued the works of Sholom Ash, I. L. Peretz, Avram Raisin, David Bergelson, David Einhorn, and many others. The same publisher transferred from St. Petersburg the publication of the monthly journal *Di Yiddishe Welt* (The Jewish World), which began publication in Wilno under the editorship of S. Nigier. The Kleckin firm, under the same editorship, also published the *Pinchas*, an annual dealing with Yiddish literature, language, folklore, criticism and bibliography.

After the First World War under the new Polish Republic, Jewish literature in Poland became the dominating factor in all of Jewish world-literature, concentrating within it the largest measure of Jewish creative talent and maintaining the closest contact with the representatives and creators of Jewish literature in all countries (with the exception of Russia) and exerting a profound influence on creative Jewish life.

During the years of confusion following the First World War the revived Yiddish literature in Poland manifested various modernistic tendencies: the *Chalastra* (Gang) in Warsaw and *Yung Yiddish* in Lodz. Later more groupings developed: *Yung Wilner*, the Socialist writers who gathered around the Bund, the "Left" proletarian writers, the group around the journal, *Globus*, etc. Yiddish literature in Poland during those years was comprehensive, mirroring all cultural and political tendencies and frequently serving as the trail-blazers for new ideas in the Jewish renaissance not only in Poland but in all parts of the world where Jewish communities were to be found.

Yiddish, in the course of several centuries, evolved in Poland from a simple folk-language into a highly developed cultural medium. In the 1931 census in Poland of 3,113,933 Jews in the country, 79.9% gave Yiddish as their mother tongue, while 243,539, or 7.9% gave Hebrew.

In 1937, one of the most difficult years of the economic crisis before the war, there appeared in Poland 443 Yiddish and Hebrew books including 31 of a scientific character, 188 works of fiction and poetry, 171 popular editions (including 107 with a religious content), 53 text-

books (including 26 foreign language text-books), and the total number of copies printed was 675,000. These figures do not include books in Polish devoted to Jewish subjects. 160 such books appeared in 1934, a year in which 285 books were published in Poland in Yiddish and 131 in Hebrew. In the preceding years, before the economic crisis, the Jewish book industry in Poland was much more active, approximately by half. Thus, in 1928, 645 Yiddish and Hebrew books were published in Poland in over 900,000 copies. The decline in the output of Jewish books during the first years of the crisis was less than in the non-Jewish market. In 1931 the production of Jewish books was 11% or 12% lower than in previous years, while the non-Jewish books declined by 20%.

It can be seen from the above figures that in the normal years Poland produced an average of two new Jewish books (that is, in Yiddish or Hebrew) each day, and the total output amounted to one printed copy for every three Jews in the country. This rate of production and consumption of books per person was exceeded only by one other Jewish community in the world—by Palestine.

As a result of the long tradition of Yiddish language and Yiddish literature in Poland, in time that country became a cultural center of literary creation in this language. Jewish books produced in Poland went all over the world.

The study of the Yiddish language was scientifically undertaken in the Yiddish Scientific Institute in Wilno, a world famous institution with branches and affiliates in over thirty countries. The Yiddish Scientific Institute was devoted to the study and diffusion of Yiddish and Jewish culture. It had departments on Economics and Statistics, History, Psychology, Education and Philology. The latter was devoted particularly to the problems of Yiddish, its study, standardization of usage in spelling, in vocabulary and in grammar, etc. Yiddish philologists and writers from all countries took part in the deliberations of the philologic section of the Yiddish Scientific Institute, and in August 1935, at its tenth anniversary conference in Wilno, there were 120 delegates and 700 guests from Poland, North Africa, France, Palestine, Latvia, Lithuania, Rumania, Austria, Argentina and Mexico. The Philologic Section published a special Journal for the study of the Yiddish language, while other departments collected and listed all available material pertaining to the bibliography and the printing of books on Jewish subjects, in every language. The library of the Institute had 40,000 volumes and the press archives had 10,000 bound volumes of Jewish newspapers and periodicals. The library and the archives were

used by Jewish writers and also by students from various countries.

Jewish publishing activity in Poland, already grown to considerable proportions before the First World War, flourished even more in the years between the two wars.

The following list of the most important Jewish publishing houses gives a picture of the abundance and the variety of Jewish book production in Poland: *Wilner Ferlag* of B. Kleckin, J. A. Lidski, B. Shimin, S. Serebeski (the last three had combined into the *Central*), *Yebudia*, *Abiseef*, A. Gitlin, *Di Welt Kultur Liga*, S. Yatchkowsky, Mark Rakowsky, *Yung Yiddish Literarische Bleter*, Weisenberg's *Verlag Arbeiter Heim*, *Naie Kultur*, *Yugend Ferlag*, S. Goldfarb, H. Brzoza, P. Graubart, M. I. Freid, *Tomor*, *Naier Ferlag*, S. K. Lendinsky, *Befreiung* (Religious-Socialist Publishing House, Lodz-New York), *Kultur-Fragen*, *Universal-Bibliotek*, *Grosben-Bibliotek*, *Beth Jacob Ferlag*, *Masorah Ferlag*, *Jabneh popular library*, *Makoroth* (Zionist Youth Publications), *Hashomer Hatzair*, *Kinder-Fraind*, *Grminke Boimelach*, *Far Kinder*, *Naie Yiddische Shul*, Shapiro and N. Justman, *Toz*, *Ort*, *Safnut* (Polish-Jewish publications), and many others.

A large publishing establishment organized by the Yiddish Scientific Institute in Wilno published, before the war, 12 volumes in various scientific categories, 12 volumes of *Yivo-Bleter* (its regular publication), a history of the Jewish labor movement before the formation of the Bund (the Jewish Workers Party), books on the Czerniowce Yiddish Conference, on the Haskalah period, on the Chmelnitzky massacres in 1648, and a jubilee volume in honor of S. Dubnow, the renowned historian, etc. The Jewish Writers' and Journalists' Association in Warsaw, through its literary fund, also engaged in publishing books.

Serving as a world center of Jewish book production, Poland was at the same time the world center of Jewish literary figures. The Jewish Pen Club in Warsaw was the headquarters for all of Europe and for its sister organization in New York. Modern literary tendencies arose from time to time in Poland which, while they lasted, influenced Jewish literary work in all countries.

Just as the Jewish book reflected Jewish life in Poland, so the Jewish writers were often the mentors and leaders of Jewish public opinion, many of them developing into spokesmen for ideas which spread throughout the Jewish world.

Nearly all Jewish writers in the world were in some way connected with Poland. Those who were not Polish Jews or of Polish antecedents, published their books in Poland or were influenced by the literary

schools which formed there, or chose as their themes the life of the Jews in Poland in the present or in the past.

A list of those who influenced or were influenced by Jewish cultural life in Poland, would have to include practically all Jewish writers since the beginnings of Jewish literature. The destruction brought by the Nazis to Jewish literary production was a blow to every Jewish writer in the world and to every conceivable aspect of Jewish cultural creativeness.

However, Jewish writers suffered not only in spirit but in the flesh as well. We do not know the names of all the Jewish writers who were killed, maimed, arrested or exiled. The first victims were Shimeon Horonczyk, the famous novelist, and the columnist Lipa Kesten.

During the mass destructions by the Nazis in the Warsaw Ghetto there perished the following poets: H. Danilewitch (Herschele), Israel Stern, Shlome Gilbert, Yechiel Lehrer, Leib Sokolow, Isaac Kaceneleson, Henryka Nadwort and Dr. Henryk Goldsmith (Janusz Korczak), creator of a new type of children's literature. Others who perished included Professor Meir Balaban, the Jewish historian and writer, the historian Dr. N. Ringelblum, the specialist in folklore Lehman, Alter Kacizne, the famous dramatist and Samuel Hirschhorn, publicist and others.

About a million Jewish volumes in Poland were plundered by the Germans. According to the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of March 7, 1941, the Nazified university of Posnan, which established a chair "for the study of the history and language of the Jews," received 400,000 volumes of the confiscated Jewish libraries in Poland. According to the same newspaper in its issue of March 28, 1941, the Nazi Institute for Jewish Problems in Frankfort-on-Main had 300,000 books, most of which were taken out of the Jewish libraries in Poland and other occupied countries.

As soon as they entered Warsaw the Germans seized 40,000 rare books and manuscripts from the Library of the Judaic Institute of the Synagogue on Tlomackie Street and carried them away on trucks. It was learned that the books were given away to the Institute for the study of the Jews, headed by the Nazi "scholar," Dr. Fleischhauer. Besides the library of the Judaic Institute there were in Warsaw other large Jewish libraries, such as the Grosser Library, the Unser Leben Library, the Borocho Library and some private lending libraries. Altogether there were in Warsaw fifty Jewish libraries with a total of 263,336 volumes.

Every city or town in Poland had at least one Jewish library, and one of the largest and most modern libraries in Poland was the Borocho Library in Lodz. The Hebrew Culture Organization Tarbut operated 425 libraries with 290,000 volumes. The Kultur-Lige, the Society for

Evening Courses for Workers with its 264 libraries, Shulkult and other Jewish cultural organizations had many hundreds of libraries. The Strashun Library in Wilno had over 40,000 volumes; the Mafitzei Haskalah Library in Wilno, too, had about 40,000 volumes. The Sholom Aleichem Library in Bialystok boasted 46,000 volumes. Other great Jewish libraries were the Ezra and the I. L. Peretz (20,000 volumes) in Krakow and the Anski Library in Lwow. There were large libraries of Hebrew and Yiddish books in Pinsk, Brzesc, Grodno, Rowne, Chelm, Tarnow and other places. These libraries were for the most part destroyed or plundered. There were some, however, which, according to reports reaching us, were buried in deep vaults to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Germans.

The world center of Jewish literature lies in ruins.

THE JEWISH PRESS IN POLAND

In 1939 the Jewish press in Poland wielded a powerful influence in the political and cultural life of Polish Jewry, and to a considerable extent, of the country in general. By September 1, 1939, the day of Hitler's attack on Poland, there were 27 Jewish dailies and over 100 weeklies in Poland, besides several dozens of other periodicals, possibly reaching more than a half a million readers. The spirit of the Jewish press was thoroughly democratic, and the influence it exerted reached far beyond Poland into the neighboring countries of Eastern and Central Europe where there were tens of thousands of Jews who read Jewish newspapers and periodicals published in Poland.

If not for the German occupation, the Jewish press would this year be celebrating its 120th anniversary, for it was on December 3, 1823 that the first issue of the first Jewish newspaper in Poland appeared in Warsaw. That newspaper was *Der Beobachter an der Weichsel* (The Observer on the Vistula). From this modest sheet in the first quarter of the nineteenth century the Jewish press developed into a great instrument molding Jewish opinion and disseminating information among Jews, and fighting for the rights of the Jews as a national minority in Poland.

Der Beobachter an der Weichsel, which lasted only through 44 issues, was a bi-lingual newspaper, printed in Polish and in Yiddish. The material in the *Beobachter* was scanty, what with the Russian censorship and its own limited resources, it had little more available to print than the ukases and ordinances of the Tzarist Russian authorities.

After it suspended publication, forty years elapsed before another Jewish periodical made its appearance.

In 1866, *Izraelita*, a Jewish weekly in the Polish language appeared in Warsaw. A year later, in 1867, came the Yiddish-language weekly, the Warsaw Jewish newspaper *Warsbaver Yiddish Tzaitung* which was soon discontinued. Several more attempts were made in the years following to publish Jewish periodicals, but none of them succeeded, until

the beginning of the twentieth century, when the Jewish press in Poland began to flourish and became the leading Jewish press in the world.

The first modern Jewish daily newspaper in Poland was *Der Weg*, (The Way) of Warsaw, founded by the eminent Journalist Zwi Prilutzki. The paper made its first appearance in 1905 and was followed by *Der Telegraf*, also of Warsaw, edited by Nahum Sokolow, the brilliant journalist who later became famous as a Zionist leader.

In 1906 the first popular Yiddish newspaper appeared in Warsaw. This was the *Yiddisher Togblat* of Samuel J. Jackan and the brothers Noah and Nechemiah Finkelstein. That newspaper enjoyed what was for that time the large circulation of 100,000.

A short time later, more daily newspapers began to appear in Warsaw and in the provinces, until in 1908 the publishers of the *Yiddisher Togblat* converted it into a large modern daily under the name *Haint* (Today) which soon became very influential and in 1914 reached a circulation of 200,000. In 1910 *Moment*, a successor to *Der Weg*, entered the field to take its place as the second large Yiddish daily. At the same time numerous daily, weekly, and monthly periodicals made their appearance in Warsaw and in the provinces.

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914, with its disruption in communications, was a hard blow to the Jewish press of Poland. But a still harder blow came in July, 1915 when the Czar's government closed down all Jewish newspapers. When the Germans occupied Poland in August 1915 they permitted the Jewish periodicals to resume publication, but even then the German administration, which was a model of liberality and humanitarianism compared to the present Nazi administration, was harsh in its dealings, and the Jewish press had to contend with many wartime difficulties. This, and the general impoverishment of the Jewish population, created conditions which permitted the press little more than a precarious existence.

New horizons were opened for the Jewish press in Poland after 1918 with the rebirth of Polish independence and the establishment of free institutions and parliamentary government together with the consequent intense political activity. New publications began to appear in the capital and in the provinces, and the Jewish press began to flourish. In those days before Hitler, when liberty and democracy were in the ascendancy everywhere, the press was held in high esteem in Poland and the Jewish press exerted great influence. It was the effective spokesman of a reading public whose confidence it enjoyed probably as no other press in the world. There was a warm, intimate contact between the newspaper and its public.

This was particularly true of such Jewish newspapers in Poland as the Zionist and democratic *Haint*, the *Folkszeitung*, organ of the Jewish Socialist Bund, and the Polish-language Jewish dials, *Nasz Przegląd*.

Readers maintained a lively contact with writers, and encouraged them in their struggle for Jewish interests, a struggle which was hard and sometimes painful and costly. However, none of the repressions of the reactionary Polish Government, could make the newspapers change the political course which they considered correct and necessary.

From the very moment Poland regained her independence, Polish Jewry waged a vigorous fight for the practical application of the rights which it had been granted at least on paper. The Jewish press did its full share in defending the right of Polish Jewry. The Jewish press paid a heavy price for its steadfastness, but it never betrayed the Polish Jews.

Most Jewish newspapers in Poland were not private enterprises, but were conducted along cooperative principles so that their contributors shared full financial consequences for the paper's political course. They wrote articles often knowing that their publication would bring about the confiscation of the newspaper.

It is difficult to say how large was the circulation of the Jewish press in Poland, but there is no doubt that at least half a million people read Jewish newspapers every day. Not every Jew could afford the full subscription for a newspaper and for that reason four or five persons often subscribed to a paper jointly. On Saturdays and holidays entire families in the provincial towns would gather to read aloud and discuss the articles and the news which appeared in the Jewish press.

The Jewish press in the Polish language, which first appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century, found fertile soil for its growth after 1918, when Poland regained her independence. The foremost among the Polish Jewish newspapers was the daily *Nasz Przegląd* (Our Review) in Warsaw, founded in 1923 by Jacob Apenszlak, Saul Wagman and Natan Szwalbe who composed the editorial board; *Nasz Przegląd* in Polish and *Haint* in Yiddish were among the finest newspapers in Poland and among the largest Jewish newspapers in the world.

In Krakow and in Lwow the Zionists founded *Nowy Dziennik* (New Daily) and *Czwila* (Moment) the first under the editorship of Dr. Wilhelm Berkelhamer, the second under Henryk Heszeles. Both were among the best edited periodicals in the country.

Poland also had a very important Hebrew press, and the daily *Hatsze-frab*, founded in 1875 by Haim Selig Slonimski and later taken over by Nahum Sokolow, under the latter's editorship became one of the most prominent Jewish newspapers in the world. Its articles on world

politics, especially those written by Sokolow, became the source of information on world matters for many thousands of Jews all over Eastern Europe.

With the outbreak of the First World War, however, the *Hatzefrab* was suspended and subsequent attempts to revive it proved futile.

Another Hebrew daily, *Hayom* (The Day) founded in the 1920's, did not last and the Hebrew press in Poland between the two great wars consisted of weekly and monthly publications, the most important of which was *Baderech* (On the Road), a weekly published by the *Haint*.

One cannot speak of the Jewish press in Poland without mentioning the important part played by the Polish branch of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in supplying information on all important events among Jews anywhere in the world.

In the number of newspapers published Poland occupied first place in the world Jewish press, with the United States of America ranking a much lower second. Thus, according to the figures compiled by the Yiddish Scientific Institute (*IWO Bleter*, November-December, Wilno of the world was published in Poland; in 1927—47%, in 1928—45% and in 1929—44%. In the U. S. A. the figure has always been below 20%.

Following is the table of the number of Jewish periodicals in Poland in the five years between 1926 and 1930 according to the statistics of the Yiddish Scientific Institute, (*IWO Bletter*, November-December, Wilno 1931):

Year	Dailies	Semi-Weeklies	Weeklies	Bi-Weeklies	Monthlies	Irregular
1926	20	1	51	13	34	11
1927	19	1	70	21	35	14
1928	25	1	85	18	43	16
1929	24	1	64	12	36	27
1930	22	1	70	13	39	27

In the years 1937-39 twenty-seven Jewish daily newspapers were published in Poland. In Warsaw there appeared in Yiddish: *Haint*, *Der Moment*, *Haintige Naies*, *Dos Wort*, *Naie Folkszeitung*, *Dos Yiddishe Togblat*, *Unser Express*, and *Radio*, and in Polish: *Nasz Przegląd* and *Piata Rano*, a total of ten newspapers.

In Wilno there were the following five dailies: *Di Zait*, *Ovent Kurier*, *Der Wilner Express*, *Wilner Radio* and *Wilner Tog*.

In Bialystok four dailies: *Gut Morgen*, *Unzer Bialystoker Express*, *Unzer Tzeitung* and *Unzer Leben*.

In Grodno: two dailies: *Grodner Kurier* and *Grodner Moment*.

In Lwow: two dailies: *Der Naier Morgen* in Yiddish and *Chwila* in Polish.

In Lodz two dailies: *Naier Folksblat* and *Lodzer Tagblat*.

In Krakow: *Nowy Dziennik* in Polish.

In Rowno: *Wolyner Yiddisher Kurier*.

Besides these there were 100 Jewish weeklies in Poland, 24 bi-weeklies, 58 monthlies, 1 semi-weekly and 16 irregularly published periodicals. All together in the years 1937-1938 there were in Poland 230 Yiddish periodicals. The Jewish press in Poland grew constantly, increasing over 25% between 1926 and 1927, the number of weekly publications doubling in the same period, and the number of bi-weeklies and monthlies increasing by 60%.

In 1937 out of 202 municipalities in Poland in which periodicals were published there were 40 which had Jewish periodicals. Considering that the Jews formed about 10% of the population of Poland, it would appear that the Jewish press was proportionately twice the size of the Polish press, except in the Western provinces where the percentage of Jewish population was very small.

The Jewish press was an important economic factor in Jewish life. At least ten thousand families made a modest living out of it, and the yearly turnover amounted to some twenty million zlotys.

When the Germans entered Poland they at once singled out the Jewish press and its representatives as the first objects of their attack and they wreaked fearful vengeance on them for their outspoken anti-Fascist and anti-Nazi policy, and for their vigorously patriotic and militant attitude during the siege of Warsaw. Jewish writers were arrested, and sent to concentration camps; the offices and printing shops of the Jewish publications were requisitioned and the linotypes and presses taken to Germany; some of the Jewish publications in Poland, especially *Nasz Przegląd*, *Haint*, and *Moment* had the latest models of linotypes and printing machinery. In Warsaw alone the German requisitioned over fifty Jewish linotypes and eight large presses costing millions of zlotys, and shipped them all to Germany.

In April 1943, during the slaughter of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, the Nazis executed a number of outstanding Jewish journalists, adding to the martyrs of the Jewish press the names of Samuel Hirszhorn, deputy in the Polish Parliament and leading editorial writer of the *Nasz Przegląd*; Ben Zion Chilinowicz, political correspondent of the *Moment* and co-chairman of the Jewish Newspaper Guild; Aron Einhorn, and

M. Gawze, co-editors of *Haint* and M. Stupnicki, outstanding journalist and author of a monograph on Spinoza.

The imposing edifice of the Jewish press in Poland erected with so much pain and love now lies in ruins, just as all of Polish Jewry lies in ruins.

In June 1940 a Jewish paper in the Polish language, *Gazeta Żydowska* (Jewish Journal), made its appearance in Krakow. The Nazis permitted the existence of the publication in order to use it as a medium for informing the Jewish population of the decrees and ordinances concerning the Jews.

The paper was issued twice weekly. A large part of it was devoted to the reprinting of the Nazi orders directed against the Jews. The rest included articles, news of Jewish life and special sections on literary, economic and social items. Even under the watchful eyes of the German censorship the writers of the articles, some of them widely known to the reading public in pre-war times, succeeded in conveying some idea of the ultimate survival of the Jewish people notwithstanding the present tragic situation. The articles were imbued with a religious spirit, with a faith in a Jewish God of Justice who would not abandon the children of Israel. Often the articles revealed a Messianic spirit and the authors endeavored to inculcate among the Polish Jews a genuine faith in the indestructible strength of the Jewish people. Hiding their meanings in proverbs, often using excerpts and examples from the Bible, the writers gave voice to words of consolation for tormented Polish Jewry.

The *Gazeta Żydowska* in its news section reflected the horrible situation of the enslaved Jews. The Nazi decrees and orders published there made it obvious that the German occupants were preparing a dreadful end for Polish Jewry.

But the paper also reveals that the Jews made every effort to resist being crushed and demoralized under the Nazi yoke and that they answered the persecutions with an internal discipline without precedent, with solicitous self-help and mutual solidarity.

We read in the paper a moving description of how the deported Jews were received by the Jewish population of the Ghettos to which the deportees were assigned. The Jews who welcomed them there, lived in the most horrible conditions, but they shared with the deportees their poor homes and their scanty food.

A part of the *Gazeta Żydowska* was devoted exclusively to two questions: economic restratification of the population and the problems of immigration, and reveals that the whole Jewish intellectual class—scholars, physicians, jurists, students at higher institutions of learning,

civil engineers, teachers, writers, musicians and artists—all began en masse to study various skilled trades, especially in the field of handicrafts which do not require complicated machinery and which can be acquired in a comparatively short time.

Thrown out of their positions by the Nazis, the Jews feverishly sought new sources of livelihood and did anything that was at all possible. There are in the *Gazeta Żydowska* articles and information from which it may be seen that intellectuals whose age or state of health did not permit them to do manual labor, sought to make a living by accepting work as janitors in the Ghetto houses.

In the section of the paper devoted to questions of emigration, there are descriptions of life in Palestine as well as information on the possibilities of settling in that country. There are discussions also of the possibilities of emigration to other countries, especially America.

One may see from the information and articles in *Gazeta Żydowska* that the Jews in Poland, from the first moment of the occupation, had a clear idea of the situation. It is evident that they understood the situation was desperate and that they feverishly sought a way out. Unfortunately no escape was found. The world remained mute and blind.

Most horrifying of all is the children's section in the *Gazeta Żydowska*. Small children, mostly between the ages of 8 and 12, send in their "contributions" to the publication. An unbelievably deep abyss of despair, fear and sadness stares out of those "poems" and "articles." The children write of their longing for the sun, for a bit of fresh air, a bit of the verdure of which the Nazis robbed them. They bewail the death of their parents, brothers and sisters, and complain of hunger and cold. They write of illnesses, sufferings and misfortunes, and they do it quietly, feelingly, with a poignant human touch.

Some time in the middle of 1942 the *Gazeta Żydowska* ceased arriving in other countries. Shortly thereafter it became known that the Nazis had stopped its publication.

JEWISH ART TREASURES

JEWISH contributions to the development of art in Poland was considerable. Jewish art until recent times was, naturally, almost exclusively religious in character. Jewish secular art began to emerge only towards the end of the 19th century, but in a very short time it attained a high standard on its own merits.

The most important Jewish art collections were concentrated in the Jewish art museums in Warsaw, Wilno and Krakow. The Warsaw museum was situated in the building of the Jewish community and was named after the famous Mathias Berson, who devoted his life to collecting objects of Jewish art with the view of establishing a permanent Jewish museum. A large part of the museum consisted of paintings by famous Jewish artists. This museum was especially famous for its collection of unique illustrated 17th century *ketuboboth* (marriage contracts), in which were included those of the Dispanozas of Venice of 1677, of Raven of Verona of 1656, and of Pontus and Bazilia of Modena of 1672. The documents, illustrated with pictures representing the traditional symbols of the twelve tribes of Israel and of the twelve planets corresponding to the months of the year, were rare specimens of old Jewish art.

Another valuable item in the Berson Museum was a 17th century illuminated colored Scroll of Esther replete with drawings depicting scenes from the Book of Esther and of old Jewish customs. There were also in the museum many old religious articles used in the synagogue and in the home, such as Sabbath candlesticks, Menorahs, cases for spices (for the Feast of Tabernacles), covers for the Scrolls and the Ark, prayer books, parchments, etc. The museum also contained about 2,000 rare books of Jewish content in different languages.

Of special interest was the unique collection of old Jewish coins, medals, signet rings and seals, including a medal in honor of the famous Donna Grazia Mendoza Nassi made by the artist Paganini in 1557.

There were art objects of similar character collected in the historico-ethnographic museum bearing the name of the famous Jewish dramatist

and scholar Ansky (author of *The Dybbuk*) in Wilno. This museum differed from the one in Warsaw mainly in that most of its material dealt with the eastern provinces in Poland. Besides religious objects the museum contained the works of the famous sculptors, Mark Antokolski, Nahum Aronson (now in New York), Ginsburg and other Jewish artists.

The same museum had a valuable collection of historical documents dealing with the social life of the Jews in Eastern Europe, including many letters by the greatest Jewish writers and communal leaders, especially of Ansky, whose name the museum bore.

The Jewish Museum in Krakow, maintained by the Jewish community there, was noted for its collection of religious art objects, such as ancient Scrolls of the Torah and prayer books. Among them were a 14th century Scroll and Synagogue Record Book (*Pinkas*). The Krakow Jewish Museum consisted of two divisions, one general and one devoted to the antiques of the Krakow Synagogue.

The Jewish community in Lwow first showed its interest in the preservation of objects of Jewish art in 1894 when a national exhibition took place in that city. A Jewish section in the division of antiquities at that exhibition consisted of old Jewish objects of art including fifty-three artistically made *porochesses* (covers) of which eleven dated from the 16th century, crowns of the Scrolls of Law, candlesticks, cases for spices and decorations for the Scrolls.

Nearly every Jewish community in Poland had its archives in which were kept objects of historical value. They included records of the community, of the synagogues, of the courts and of the Jewish craft guilds. The richest archives were those in the Warsaw community, containing some 3,000 documents from the beginning of the Jewish settlement in Warsaw to the outbreak of the war. It was planned to expand the Warsaw archives into a central Jewish archives institute for all Poland.

Private individuals, too, had important art collections and archives. Among owners of such collections were Noach Prilucki, Benjamin Mintz, Dr. Samuel Goldflamm, M. Goldstein, Dr. Reichenstein and M. Zagajski. The latter's collection over a period of twenty years became so rich and interesting that it was considered a private museum. It included several hundred very rare objects used for ceremonial purposes in the Jewish faith, among them a 15th century Scroll of the Law and objects taken by the Jewish exiles from Spain on their expulsion in 1492, a *porochess* from the synagogue in Worms, Germany dating from the 11th century and some 100 artistically decorated circumcision

knives of various periods, a 12th century Hebrew Bible, 120 winecups used for *Kiddush*, some dating from the 11th and 12th centuries and a two-seat armchair donated by a Jewish carpenter to the synagogue in Sandomierz in 1375 to be used during the ceremony of circumcision by the rabbi and the *sandak* who holds the infant.

This collection also included a library and a picture gallery in which there were some 120 paintings by the great Polish-Jewish artist Maurycy Gottlieb and 25 by Isaac Lewitan.

The art of the Jews in Poland was not, however, to be found exclusively in museums and archives. Every important synagogue in the country represented a definite architectural style and contained many valuable objects and decorations. The oldest and most interesting of the synagogues in Poland from the point of view of Jewish art was the Kazimierz Synagogue in Krakow, built in the 14th century and containing ornamental arcades and arc columns. This type of architecture was later adopted for the so-called "fortress" synagogues of the 17th century, designed as defenses against the invading Tartars. Other synagogues of interest to students of art were the Isserless Synagogue in Krakow, the Old Synagogue of Wilno (built in 1572), famous also because the illustrious sage, the Gaon of Wilno, frequented it, the beautiful synagogue in Gniezno, the synagogue in Miedzyborz, and the famous Chadoshim Synagogue in Lwow. There were also many interesting synagogue buildings in the smaller towns, some of them wooden structures several hundred years old. Most of the important synagogues in Poland were, however, stone and brick structures modelled after the Lwow Suburban Synagogue which was built in 1632. It had nine arcs inside supported by four large columns. Of that type were the synagogues in Zolkiew, Rzeszow, Przeworsk, Luck and Wilno.

Jewish art also found expression in the Jewish cemeteries in Poland. The monuments over some of the graves were often examples of elaborate Jewish architecture. In recent years some of the outstanding Jewish sculptors erected monuments on the graves of the great Jewish writers and leaders in the cemeteries of Warsaw, Krakow, Lodz and Wilno.

Most of the wooden synagogues were to be found in Galicia and the style was known as Carpathian. The woodwork on the Arks of the Scrolls, representing biblical figures, was also known as Carpathian.

The Jewish artisans' organizations also had many interesting antiques of the old Jewish craftsmen's guilds. Each guild, especially the goldsmiths, the engravers, the printers, the weavers, embroiderers, etc., made their own rings, seals, ceremonial costumes and other objects of art, and collections in Polish cities and towns were full of such objects.

Among the antiques were the famous candlesticks (Menorahs) of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries made in the original Polish-Jewish style and representing an important aspect of Jewish art in Poland. These candlesticks, made of copper and gilt brass, were sought by art collectors all over the world.

In the years 1919 to 1939, during the period of the Polish Renaissance, the Jews of Poland took particular care to cultivate Jewish art in every form. Warsaw had a Jewish Art Society which was the cradle and the center of modern Jewish art. The Society was founded in 1920 by a group of friends of Jewish art and headed by Dr. Samuel Goldflamm and Jacob Apenszlak. The Society sponsored art collections and exhibitions, fostered a taste and a demand for art among the public and encouraged and supported Jewish artists of talent.

Painting, the graphic arts, metal work, etching, architecture, decorative art and sculpture were the arts fostered by the Society. Its exhibitions were treated as important events not only by the Jewish, but by the general Polish press as well, and were taken note of by the Polish Government which purchased for the State Museum some of the articles the Society exhibited.

Jewish painters, sculptors, architects and graphic artists took part in those exhibitions and many of them later attained world fame. Among the artists exhibited were Jacob Apfelbaum, Henryk Berlevi, Felix Friedman, Mane Katz, Arthur Szyk, Maniewicz, W. Brauner, Josef and Zigmunt Seidenbeutel, Jacob Sliwniak, Israel Tykocinski, Maksimiljan Eljowicz, Maurycy Trembacz, Joseph Gabowicz, Jacob Weinles, Maurycy Minkowski, Zygmunt Menkes, Josef Berkowicz, Zofja Bernstein, Henryk Glicenstein, Jacob Budko, Regina Mundlak, J. Cygler, Jacob Hanft, Lucja Welcher, J. Wajzenberg, S. Centnerszwer, H. Guterma, Merzer, Fiszal Rubinlicht.

Branches of the Jewish Art Society existed in Krakow, Lwow, Radom, Wilno, Lodz and Katowice. In the twenty years of its existence it held 125 exhibitions. Shortly before the outbreak of the war, the Society endeavored to establish workshops for the production of art objects for export to Jewish communities abroad.

In Wilno there existed also a branch of the Warsaw Society, and an independent Jewish Art Society, founded by a group of Jewish intellectuals headed by Dr. David Jedwabnik, which in the twenty years of its activities helped to popularize Jewish art.

That Society, too, arranged periodic exhibitions. In Krakow practically every Jewish society devoted some of its energies to the fostering

and popularization of Jewish art. In Lwow this was the specialty of the local lodge of the B'nai B'rith.

All this is in the past. The Germans looted the collections of Jewish art treasures. Many artists perished in the horrible days of mass slaughters. Many of the masterpieces of Jewish art were shipped to Germany.

THE JEWISH THEATRE IN POLAND

THE German invasion of Poland destroyed not only the material existence of Polish Jewry but also the cultural life which had come to its most vigorous expression in the twenty years of Polish independence between the two World Wars. For some time after the invasion, however, and until the beginning of the mass deportations and mass-executions in the summer of 1942, cultural activity still went on among the Jews. The meager news reaching us from inside the Ghetto walls told of an underground press, of paintings by Jewish artists exhibited in drab rooms in the Ghetto, and of improvised theatrical performances and concerts.

Jewish musicians even organized an orchestra so that the music-loving Jewish public could at least satisfy its artistic hunger, its physical hunger being beyond alleviation. The fires of cultural life still smouldered amid the ruins of Polish Jewry.

But these activities represented only the remnants of the dynamic Jewish cultural and artistic life which found expression in many forms of art, among which the Jewish theatre was one of the most prominent.

When the Nazis smashed at Poland the Jewish theatre had reached the peak of its development. There were three outstanding Jewish theatres in Warsaw, one in Krakow, one in Lwow, and one in Wilno, while several Jewish theatrical troupes toured the country.

The Jewish theatre in Poland had a long history. It had its origin in the mediaeval mystery plays and in the itinerant actors who depicted scenes from the Bible, especially the story of the Book of Esther. By the end of the nineteenth century regular Jewish theatres were established in Warsaw, Krakow and Lwow with companies of talented actors and playwrights. In Galicia, which was then under Austrian rule, the dynamic Abraham Goldfaden, a gifted actor, producer and playwright, emerged like a star on the Jewish theatrical firmament.

In Warsaw, the Jewish theatre established by Kaminski played in its own wooden structure before large audiences which enthusiastically applauded the performances of the director's brilliant wife, Esther

Rachel Kaminska, later known as "the mother of the Jewish stage." Kaminski played not only leading parts in original Yiddish plays, which were for the most part of the popular didactic and melodramatic type, but was the first to acquaint the Jewish public with the masterpieces of world dramatic literature. Her performances in the plays of Shakespeare, Schiller, Ibsen and Strindberg won the warm approval of the non-Jewish critics in Poland as well as of the Jewish public.

During the past forty years there were attempts to raise the Jewish theatre to the high artistic level for which the Polish theatre was noted. These attempts were crowned with marked success.

In 1916 the Wilno Troupe was organized, the general cultural atmosphere of the city favoring the creation of such a theatre. It was modelled on Stanislawski's famous Russian Art Theatre. The young enthusiasts who joined the group worked hard against all handicaps and successfully staged plays by the best Jewish writers: Asch, Pinski, Peretz, Hirschbein and others. The fame of the theatre spread beyond Wilno, which was then under German occupation, and reached Berlin, where the outstanding liberal newspapers published many accounts of the excellent new Jewish theatre. After many difficulties due to wartime conditions, the Wilno Troup moved to Warsaw, making the famous old Kaminski Theatre its home. There it staged the world-premiere of the famous Jewish mystery play *The Dybbuk* by An-ski. David Herman's production of the play was done with a technical skill thereto unknown on the Jewish stage. The troupe subsequently performed *The Dybbuk* in the capitals of Europe and in America where it enjoyed an enthusiastic reception by the press and the public.

For ten years the Wilno troupe held the boards, arousing a great deal of interest not only among the regular frequenters of the Jewish theatre but also among non-Jewish critics and lovers of theatrical art, and was an important factor in bringing the Jewish circles removed from Jewish culture close to the spiritual treasures of their people. The Wilno Troupe pioneered the way to the modern artistic Jewish theatre, but it was not the only enterprise of its character.

The young and brilliant Jewish actor and producer, Zygmunt Turkow, assisted by his wife, Ida Kaminska, the daughter of the famous "Mother of the Jewish Stage," established the WIKT, or *Warszauer Iddisher Kunst Teater*, the Warsaw Jewish Art Theatre in Warsaw. Its repertoire varied from the old-fashioned type of Yiddish comedy of the 19th century, such as *Serkele* by Ettinger, to such literary plays as *The Seven Who Were Hanged* by Andreyev, *The Miser* by Moliere and *It is Hard to be a Jew* by Sholem Aleichem.

When Turkow left for South America, his wife, an excellent artist, founded her own theatre in Warsaw and scored an enormous success. Sandler, Lipman, Rotman and many other first rate artists continued in the work and each theatrical season saw new efforts made in the direction of making the Jewish theatre a permanent institution.

An interesting and important contribution to the development of Jewish theatrical art in Poland was made by Dr. Michael Weichert, a pupil of the famous director Max Reinhardt. He organized a youth theatre studio, where young actors under his direction staged modern plays, including some from the American drama.

The revue theatre found its exponents in several theatres which presented folk songs, monologues, sketches, comedies, etc., with considerable skill and color. The most outstanding theatres in this field were Azazel, created by the Jewish Society of Arts, Scala and Ararat (in Lodz).

Besides these local theatres the Jewish public in Poland witnessed many performances by Jewish theatrical troupes from abroad: Maurice Schwartz from America, the Habima and the Ohel (playing in Hebrew) from Palestine, and others.

With the German invasion the theatres were closed and many of the artists dispersed or arrested. Later, inside the Ghetto walls, efforts were made to continue Jewish performances with the scanty means at the disposal of the artists. Hungry players performed before hungry audiences in the daytime, before the curfew. But as the shadow of the great catastrophe grew, the heroic attempt to continue Jewish cultural life was extinguished.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

FORCED LABOR

From a survey made by the Institute of Jewish Affairs. (*Jewish Affairs*, March, 1942.)

More than 2,000,000 Jews lived in the occupied Polish territory officially known as the Generalgouvernement. Of the Jews who remained behind in the Reich-annexed provinces (pre-war Jewish population more than 600,000), about half fled or were expelled to the Generalgouvernement. Most of the others were crowded into the textile center of Lodz, the only Polish city with a Jewish population over 100,000 that was incorporated into "Greater" Germany. In addition thousands of Jews from Western Europe have been sent to work in Lodz mills. On March 24, 1942 the Belgian Government-in-Exile charged that 10,000 Belgian Jews, mainly of Polish origin, had been transported from Antwerp to work in Lodz textile factories producing uniforms for the German army. Indicative of the status of Jews in this area is an advertisement inserted in the *Litzmannstadter Zeitung*, a Nazi newspaper published in Lodz, by the German mayor of a nearby town: "Have at my disposal 250 qualified Jewish tailors, furriers and hatters. Accept orders for army as well as private enterprises."

In the so-called Generalgouvernement, whose frontiers contain the largest concentration of Jews in Europe, two compulsory labor decrees were enacted a month after the Polish campaign ended. The first established labor duty (*Arbeitspflicht*) for all Poles between 18 and 60 years of age under the supervision of the Labor Division of the Generalgouvernement. It provided that Poles were to work "on farms, the construction and upkeep of public buildings, the construction of roads, of waterways and railroads, the regulation of rivers, and all work connected with the improvement of agriculture." Poles were promised payment on "an equitable scale" as well as special protection for their families. A second decree dated the same day—October 26, 1939—established forced labor (*Zwangsarbeit*) for Jews and contained no pay provision. The difference in the two edicts was intended to comfort the Poles with the notion that beneath them, despite their defeat, was a still lower order of men. To accentuate the ideological aspect of Jewish forced labor the decree entrusted its supervision to the Supreme Commander of the black-uniformed Elite Guard (*Schutzstaffel*) and State Police for occupied Poland.

An edict in the name of the S. S. Supreme Commander, dated December 11, 1939, prohibited Jews from changing their residence without a special permit, and ordered all Jews entering the territory of the Generalgouvernement to register with the local authorities within twenty-four hours after

their arrival. The following day another S. S. decree provided that "all Jewish inhabitants of the Generalgouvernement from 14 to 60 years of age are in principle subject to forced labor." The labor term was fixed at two years, with the ironic reservation that it could be prolonged if "the pedagogical purposes of such compulsory labor have not been attained." It also stated that "the duty to register applies in the first instance to all male Jews from 12 to 60 years of age." Jews conscripted for forced labor are required by the decree of December 12, 1939 to bring with them the tools of their trade, as well as blankets and food enough for two days. Failure to register or report for forced labor carries a ten-year prison penalty. The same punishment applies to the members of Jewish Councils for failing to register Jewish inhabitants for forced labor.

During the early days of their occupation of Poland, the Germans surrounded Jewish neighborhoods in leading Polish cities with cordons of S. S. men and soldiers armed with sub-machine guns. They indiscriminately rounded up Jews of every age for the task of clearing the wreckage left by their air raids. A correspondent of the *Voelkischer Beobachter* described the German method in these frank words:

"We simply went through the streets collecting them, and whoever, despite the friendly requests, thought he had no time, was soon taught better. During a war there is no time to waste, and there are—thank God!—plenty of ways of dealing with recalcitrant Jews."

Later the Nazi authorities decided that a better system of labor conscription would result in greater economic advantage to the Reich. They therefore permitted the Councils of the Jewish communities to select men for the labor battalions. Jews who are physically incapable of performing forced labor are deferred on condition that they pay a special tax to their Jewish communal organization. Out of these funds and other taxes they collect, the Jewish Councils attempt to compensate conscripted workers. The pauperization of the Jews of Poland has, however, made it extremely difficult to continue this method of meeting German demands. Furthermore, Jewish organizations are often required to fill impossible labor quotas. In the tubercular sanatorium center of Orwock, for example, four thousand persons were required to register early in 1941 although only a handful were capable of manual work. As a result, the few able-bodied men of Orwock were expected to perform the labor of the entire quota of four thousand workers.

The Jewish Councils are compelled to send workers to erect barracks for Jewish labor camps, and to furnish conscripts with work clothes, shoes and food until they reach their destination. In addition the communal organizations send medical assistance and supplies to the camps whenever possible, and try to maintain some contact between the laborers and their families.

From a study of the pages of the Nazi-controlled *Gazeta Zydowska* (Jewish Gazette) alone, there are known to have been at least 85 Jewish labor camps in the Generalgouvernement as of summer, 1941.

Workers are quartered in unheated barracks, barns or stables where elementary hygienic facilities are unknown. Food rations do not exceed the bare subsistence level. A typical day's diet consists of black coffee and bread for breakfast and supper, bread and potato soup for dinner.

Jewish laborers toil on road gangs and in stone quarries; they lay railway tracks, work on river canals and reclamation projects; they repair bridges, drain marshes, clear forests and dig in peat beds. When released from labor camps, subject to later recall, they must look to their Jewish communal organizations for assistance. Usually they require medical attention and a period of physical and spiritual rehabilitation. In most communities men who have worked in Nazi labor camps receive preference for the very limited number of paid jobs that are available. All Jews within the prescribed age limits must carry cards indicating whether they have performed forced labor or have for some reason been exempted or deferred. In the absence of an official notation to the contrary, the bearer is subject to immediate labor conscription.

Punishment for the slightest infraction of rules is as drastic as in a concentration camp. Refusal to perform assigned work, failure to produce the required output, or any other breach of Nazi discipline, results in transfer to the penal labor camp at Trzebinka, near Sokolow, where Jews and non-Jews alike are subjected to forced labor of exceptional severity. The total number of Jews in the forced labor camps of Poland, as collated from *Gazeta Zydowska* as of summer 1941, was not less than 80,000, but the present figure is probably much higher.

An additional 10,000 to 15,000 Jews are compelled to work by day on special construction projects or for private German contractors. These men are permitted to journey home for the night. They work in coal and iron mines, steel mills, sugar refineries, railroad freight yards, lumber mills and on farms.*

Within the cities and towns of occupied Poland, a large part of the Jewish population that is not employed in labor camps or other special industrial and agricultural projects, must perform various kinds of unskilled and crude work. After the Polish campaign of September 1939, and again since the

* An examination of the *Gazeta Zydowska* for the eighteen-month period ending in the summer of 1941 discloses Jewish forced labor gangs at work in the following localities:

Road-construction in the vicinity of Slomniki, Skawina, Staszow, Szydłow, Makow, Zyrardow, Swieze, Lyszkowice, Opatow, Glogow, Jedrzejow, Lipie, Milejow, Bytom; a *trolley line* from Bedzin to Bytom, *waterways* in the vicinity of Nowy Korczyn, Nowy Sacz, in the Lublin district, in the Kozienice-Gniewosz Valley, in the vicinity of Jedrzejow, on the River Bzura near Lowicz, on the Vistula; *bridge-construction* on the River Pilica near Przedborz, on the River Czarna Przemsza near Bedzin; *sawmills* in Wlodawa, Zawadowka; *sugar factory* in Lyszkowice; *quarries* in Zaryte, Przedborz, Opatow, Krzeszowice, Chmielnik-Kielecki, Krakow, *iron and steel mines* in Tychow near Starachowice, Stolpia Nowa; *farms* in the vicinity of Pulawy, in Leg near Zabno, Lyszkowice, Radwajowice, Zareby Koscielne, Badowo-Deniki, Gawartowa Wola, Izdebnia, Milanowek, Laski.

outbreak of the Russo-German hostilities, the clearing of vast quantities of debris and the repair of water mains, gas pipes, power stations and other public services, led the Germans to mobilize thousands of Jews for forced labor. They also drafted Jews for menial work in their offices and in public buildings. On a number of occasions all the Jewish inhabitants of a town, including the women and children, have been directed by Nazi authorities to clear the streets after a heavy snowfall. The number of Jews impressed into sporadic and ill-defined work of this type cannot be estimated with any degree of accuracy.

In recent months the German authorities in Poland have found it increasingly necessary to utilize the skilled labor of Jewish artisans. Officials in the Reich have been urging German manufacturers to place their orders with the so-called collective workshops which the Jewish Councils were ordered to organize for the purpose of supplying German needs. Such workshops of tailors, carpenters, blacksmiths, plumbers and shoemakers have been organized in all the ghettos of Poland. In Warsaw alone several thousand artisans are now employed in clothing, glove and shoe factories organized by the Jewish Council.* These establishments must deliver orders placed by the German army and private German contractors. To turn out finished products on German time schedules, Jewish artisans are compelled to work more than twelve hours a day under the threat of a collective fine or imprisonment. Often the workshops are little more than crude barracks which are crowded far beyond their capacity. The Jewish Councils are expected to furnish the tools and machinery. Raw materials are supplied by German contractors in quantities sufficient to cover their orders. It is difficult to estimate the number of Jewish artisans employed in the collective workshops and factories of occupied Poland. On the basis of official documentation 10,000 seems to be an extremely narrow estimate. A short time ago the German authorities indicated that they were in search of 50,000 additional tailors, cabinet makers and weavers. Artisans employed in workshops turning out goods for the German army are not sent to labor camps. In view of the penalties they face for failure to deliver the output demanded by the Germans, they are to all intents a part of the Jewish forced labor army.

Although the decree of April 1940 establishing a pay scale for "non-German working men and women" in the Generalgouvernement does not expressly exclude Jews, the regulations regarding Jewish forced labor indicate no obligation on the part of the Germans to pay wages. Workers on special construction projects receive subsistence allowances and artisans eke out an existence from the prices the Germans choose to pay for finished articles, but at least 80% of the Jewish forced laborers are not paid by the Germans.

Under the wage schedule for *German* unskilled workers in the Generalgouvernement of April 1940, the value of an hour's labor is fixed at an

* See *The Warsaw Ghetto*. JEWISH AFFAIRS, No. 5, December, 1941.

equivalent of about twenty cents. At the conservative average of sixty hours' work per week on the part of 80,000 Jews in labor camps, the value of the first two years of Jewish forced labor in the Generalgouvernement amounted to about \$100,000,000. This does not take into account either the value of unskilled urban labor or the fact that perhaps the majority working in labor battalions were formerly trained technicians, engineers, doctors, teachers, merchants and lawyers. The value in terms of lost earning power is obviously much greater than the sum indicated above.

The status of so-called "free" Jewish labor is governed by a decree of December 15, 1941 which provides substantially the same forms of discrimination as those governing Jewish labor in the Reich. But the difference between that which the Germans call free—such as the labor of artisans in ghetto factories—and forced labor in strict German terminology is one of degree rather than substance. There is no "free" Jewish labor in occupied Poland in any meaningful sense.

AFTER LIQUIDATION OF THE WARSAW GHETTO

From report received by the World Jewish Congress and the Representation of Polish Jewry.

At the end of August, 1942, after the Warsaw massacre had begun, the Germans started the liquidation of the Jewish centers in suburban settlements. The first victims were: Otwock, Falenica, Swider, then Rembertow, Kobylka and others. The course of events, generally identical with the pogrom in the Warsaw ghetto, was very bloody. In Falenica, dozens of persons were shot at the assembly place while the remainder were sent to an unknown destination. Those assembled were kept outdoors for 10 hours, under a burning sun, without water or food. Only a few left Rembertow in the direction of Otwock, and even of these, many fell on the way. The Germans rode on bicycles, urging the deportees to run and shooting at those who fell or stayed behind.

In the area of the Dabrowa Basin, where open ghettos existed, mass deportations took place during August. Children and old people were taken separately. The apartments were ordered left open, the direction of the trip was unknown.

There is information to the effect that the liquidation of the ghettos in Radom and Lwow took a particularly bloody course. Hundreds of victims fell on the spot. The Germans and Ukrainians looted the property of the deportees.

On August 24, 1942, the German police could be seen inciting Aryan (Polish—Tr.) youths to rob the abandoned Jewish homes. Significantly, the Latvian guards did not intervene though they usually fire if anyone approaches the barbed-wire enclosures. The Germans, present on the spot, photographed the breaking of windows and the carrying away of loot, etc.

The Germans are said to have made an anti-Jewish film based on the conditions in the Warsaw ghetto: the well-being of the rich, the dirt in the proletarian homes, scenes of orgy, smuggling, etc.

The Polish population also sustains bloody victims during the Jewish pogroms; a number of persons in Warsaw were shot while attempting to deliver food to the ghetto. There were cases of purely accidental victims: during street hunts many persons with legal passes were killed, Poles were shot by stray bullets in the side streets of the city. Poles entering the ghetto were subject to strictest personal search and violence so that, from the beginning of August, they avoided entering the ghetto even though they had legal passes.

This short review of the history of the Warsaw ghetto cannot be concluded without an attempt to present to persons outside of the sphere of German terror, the extent and intensity of the murders committed up to September 1st on some 250,000 Jews—murder which still continues. Any attempt to present this story of murder unprecedented in history must be prefaced by an appeal to the people of England and America: Believe in things unbelievable. Remember that the information which reaches you is the truth amidst which we lived and died. The facts that we give you are not unique or especially selected. They are daily occurrences. They are not all the facts nor individual or typical facts. They are not isolated moments, for each of them happens daily in tens or hundreds of cases. We inform you that since July 22, 1942, from a score to a few hundred Jews are being shot to death daily in the streets and homes of Warsaw. These murders occur during the raids for people who are transported to their death. From among the daily contingents of deportees (6, 7 or 10,000 peoples) some 50 to 100 old people, cripples, etc. are daily led to the cemetery where they are shot and buried. The transports of deportees are sent mostly to Treblinka (4 kilometers from Malkinia) where they are killed and buried, at the rate of a few thousands daily. Big bulldozers were brought to Treblinka to dig these graves and they operate constantly. The stench of decomposition within an area of 5 kilometers make the peasants of the neighborhood ill; often they flee to escape it. In addition to Treblinka, there are similar camps in Belzec and Sobibor. We could not find out whether a part of the deportees remain alive. We heard only about extermination.

Should anyone have any doubts as to whether it is possible to kill five, six, ten thousand people daily, he can convince himself by the testimony of thousands of witnesses from Orwock, Rembertow, Siedlce, Minsk-Mazowiecki, Lomza and other localities. It was before the eyes of these people that from two to ten thousand Jews were killed in each of the above localities, within a couple of hours.

This is the graph of numbers; the graph of cruelty equals it. These people, transported to their deaths, are subjected to maximum suffering. Thus, cars meant for 40 people, are crowded with over 100. The cars are

sealed and the floors covered thickly with quick-lime; sometimes the victims are ordered to take off their shoes so that the lime may act more effectively.

To add to these tortures, small children are torn away from their mothers. Entire orphanages have been deported. The personnel did not leave the children, but this was ended by the transport system. Children are loaded separately and the personnel sent off with another transport.

Shooting on the spot is held as a humanitarian deed, as is the throwing of persons out of a sixth-story window. If the hangman throws a mother with her child out of the window, he must have a very kind heart. Such scenes occur daily by the dozen. There are examples of unsurpassed cruelty: a pregnant Jewish woman fled from the ghetto; she found shelter in a small house at Grochow (the outskirts of Warsaw), and gave birth to a child, assisted by the Poles. A German gendarme found her, shot her instantly and crushed the infant under his feet.

It is hard to enumerate further. This should suffice as a gauge of cruelty. The scale of desperation and resignation should be measured by the number of suicides. They are committed by individuals and entire families by the use of gas or cyanide. Daily in some house or other, someone takes poison, sometimes a dozen of people in one home commit suicide. The pharmacies in the ghetto were closed to make suicides impossible. There are cases of mass-insanity. Some beg the "Junaks" (foreign troop formations) to shoot them. Nothing is done without graft. The "Junaks" ask 100 Zloty for shooting (and then they may not do it).

The fate of the rather large number of Jews who either did not live in the ghetto or fled and hid in the Aryan quarters, is very uncertain. There are thousands of such persons in Warsaw. The Germans announce that after the liquidation of the ghetto they will concentrate on "combing" out these remainders; it may be assumed that death will be the punishment. The matter becomes more complicated in view of the fact that the entire population of the General Government has recently received identification cards.

According to information of late November 1942, the Warsaw ghetto numbered only 30,000 Jewish inhabitants.

UNDERGROUND NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE IN THE WARSAW GHETTO

Excerpt from report in the Polish underground newspaper, *Polska*, April 29, 1943.

"Before Palm Sunday, 1943, the streets of the Warsaw Ghetto, which are always dead during working hours and come to life for a short while at dawn and in the evening, filled with nervous excitement as is always the case when the shadow of fear hovers over them or when a ray of hope reached them. People began to gather at the ends of streets, in cellars and in hidden court yards. Secret conversations were carried on, secret signs were made and

hidden slogans uttered. Unconfirmed rumors were started and spread to unknown places. Human fears enlarged all these rumors and reports to infinity.

"They are going to seize Jews once more to be sent to an unknown destination.

"Once more a new group of 5,000 people!

"For death, for extermination—were the cries of despair heard everywhere.

"There were also optimists. This time, the optimists said, the Jews would be sent to Germany to war factories. Jews will be fed, housed and even paid.

"This was the reasoning that led to the uncritical repetitions of the reports of the Gestapo agents and of the agents of the Arbeits Amt.

"Talk continued until an order appeared that 5,000 Jews must apply for work at the Stawki Street.

"The first transport was sent away at once. It was not kept in the shut-in wagons on the loading place for long.

"The deportation of Jews can still be delayed. We must go to the Kehillah, we must use all means to prevent this!

"Suddenly, something horrible occurred. A few Jews from the first transport for forced labor who had been sentenced to death, escaped and returned to the ghetto. They brought the following report: The first transport was ordered to dig graves outside of Warsaw and the Jews standing over the graves were shot down by machine-guns as hay is mown down. For the second transport, it was decided to cover these graves with lime to prepare for new graves.

"The Jewish streets were trembling with fear at the impending doom. All conversations about seeking aid ceased.

"No more men for the Nazis!—was the slogan which passed among the Jewish leaders.

"No one applied for leaving. All disappeared from the streets and the homes and the workshops. The Gestapo began to seize women and children from the homes, kept them as hostages, dragged them to the cemetery and ordered them to prepare graves for themselves in the event that their husbands and fathers did not apply for work.

"The answer to this was a hail of fire and grenades from the apparently dead houses in the ghetto. The roofs of the houses breathed the fire of death. The German soldiers were seized by fear and tried to run away. They sent an alarm to SS men. They mobilized police. They surrounded the outer walls of the ghetto. A shower of bullets and grenades again started from behind the houses of the ghetto. The Germans brought 4 armored trucks with muzzles of the rifles stretched out upon the Jews. They began a chaotic bombardment of the houses. Meanwhile, bullets and grenades fell more and more often from various defense points in the ghetto. After a short while, the Germans had to withdraw the armored trucks, unable to master the situation. Later the

Germans placed heavy arms on Bonifraterska and Plac Krasinskich streets in order to capture with two fires the chief centers of the rebellion.

"It was the big Monday, 6 p.m. The noise of the firearms made all the buildings in the ghetto tremble. Window panes in the houses of Stare Miasto burst as a result of the bullets. Thousands of echoes resounded in all of Warsaw. Suddenly, a breathless representative of the German Civil Defense arrived and protested against the use of artillery against the Jewish population.

"The German civil authority believes that the artillery warfare endangers the public security, because they can cause the weak buildings of the Polish section of the city to fall. What is more important, he added, (and here he let the cat out of the bag) the noise of the fight destroys the rest of the German inhabitants of the city. These do not know what is happening and their fear is greater than is their fear of the enemy bombing attacks. Furthermore, there must be quiet, because tomorrow everyone must be rested to work for the beloved fatherland.

"After a few short conferences, after a few short telephone conversations with Krakow, the managers of the 'front' accepted the 'practical' protest of the civil administration and accepted the following compromise. The artillery attacks were silenced. Instead, they began to throw long range incendiary grenades.

"The sky of the north of Warsaw was covered by a black cloud of smoke, by day and by night by the bloody fires.

"As the answer to the murderous destruction of homes and lives, the Jews began to set fire to the workshops which worked for the German military. They burned a large factory of mattresses for the German hospitals along with other strategic points.

"The Jews destroyed a large factory of brushes for the German army which belonged to a Krakow speculator and to German generals. They seized packs of uniforms, underwear, boots, belts and burned the fittings of the workshops. They also burned a large furniture factory in which German speculators manufactured new furniture by repairing old furniture which they stole from the Jews.

"Numbers of Jews marched through the streets of the ghetto wearing German uniforms, German boots and protecting their heads from German artillery, with German helmets. Special Jewish fire fighters tried to localize the fires. The Warsaw fire department did not fight the fires in the ghetto because they had orders to work only when the fire spread to the gentile part of the ghetto. The Germans tried to cut off the flow of water to the ghetto. They could not achieve this because the main source of water for the ghetto also supplied water to other parts of the city.

"In this way, day after day passed—the big week . . .

"On Holy Thursday, when the struggle on the 'second front' had lasted for some time, to the astonishment of public opinion, the Germans, in order to quiet the German comrades and their Axis friends, brought a group of jour-

nalists to the new theater of war. The group of journalists consisted of a few German correspondents, two Italians, one Hungarian, one Finn, and a suspected Swede. The group was led by an officer of the propaganda front and the assistant of the officer of the Gestapo. In order to insure their safety, the group was preceded by a half a platoon of soldiers with guns ready to fire. They were led to the 'pacified' part of the ghetto, that is to say the part where all the Jews had been killed.

"There were still some small fires and the remainder of the ruins was still smouldering. There were still bodies of dead Jews and Germans on the streets. It was hard to tell them apart because the Jews had put on German uniforms. The Jews, explained the leader of the group, have hidden the women and children in special underground cellars. These cellars were fortified and are spread throughout the whole ghetto. The Jews even used certain sewers for these forts. In this way, the Jews have good methods of communication with the outer world. In order to deal with this situation, the police had been guarding the vents of the sewers that are near the outer parts of the ghetto for several days. Food and ammunition for the Jews have been arriving through these vents. There, the Jews prepare a retreat for the combatants in case of capitulations. In all houses suitable for defense points, the Jews have demolished the steps. Jewish combatant units are hidden on roofs and attics. Jews have prepared ladders and special cables by which they can leave the house in case of emergency. The struggle with the Jews, is therefore, under these conditions very difficult, continued the German expert. In order to conquer the ghetto, we must conquer each house with ammunition in our hands. We need powerful forces and many victims for this. The only way to destroy everything—men, their homes, their guns—is fire. Fire in order to destroy the nest of rebellion to its very foundation.

"This was the explanation of the German expert of the struggle against the Jews in the ghetto. Many unbelievable and unconfirmed reports have reached us about the struggle in the Warsaw ghetto. Even if some of the reports are exaggerated, one fact is certain: The strength of the German military and police machine is being weakened daily. This strength broke near Stalingrad, had to retreat from Tunis, and stands powerless before a group of Jews who defend themselves in the ghetto.

"We wander in the streets of Warsaw in search of men and in search of news. Two signs strike our eyes: one by the leader of the SS threatening death for anyone who helps Jews, or goes to them, the second by Herr Leist is a call to the population of Warsaw appealing to the single people to go to Germany where they will be fed like Germans and paid like Germans. An old song of the well-known German repertoire. We dare not let ourselves be led astray by all this sweet sounding talk. We must count on our strength. We must defend our Polish soil.

"The smoke and fire bring us a variety of thoughts written in a variety of signs. The fire in the Warsaw Ghetto reminds us of days of old when the

mad Nero burned Rome, but the eternal truth lasts forever, and the truth is: I am the God that led you out of bondage."

EYEWITNESS REPORT ON THE EXTERMINATION

A Pole who escaped from Poland in February, 1943, made the following report to the Representation of Polish Jewry. (*News Bulletin*, September, 1943.)

"During the time I was in Poland, I visited the Warsaw Ghetto twice—the first time in October 1942 and the second, in January 1943. I also had the occasion to be in the Concentration Camp for Jews 12 miles outside of Belzec near Lublin.

"A special and vicious system has been implemented by the Germans in their plan to exterminate both Jews and Poles—a system of terror and starvation. They employ not only the services of spies or of provocateurs. This would prove too lengthy a procedure and too much time would be lost. Theirs is the method of open and devastating terror. If, for instance it is known that a certain physician has been active in the underground movement, all physicians of the city are placed under arrest. It is by such a "mass system" strategy that they hope to eliminate underground activities and annihilate the population. The system of collective responsibility is applied—for every German killed, anywhere between 50 and 100 Jews or Poles will be murdered. In 1942, 200 victims were murdered for every German slain.

"The food ration for Poles is: 250 grams of bread every other day; 150 grams of marmalade (made of beets or carrots) every ten days; 50 kilos of potatoes and 50 kilos of coal per year. During 1942 no coal at all was distributed to them. At infrequent intervals small quantities of ersatz-honey can be obtained. Theoretically, the Jews were entitled to the same rations. Actually, however, all they received was 150 grams of bread every two days. The rations for ghetto inhabitants were altogether ephemeral, they existed on paper only. In 80-90% of the cases, Jews have been reduced to exploiting all their ingenuity and can only survive through smuggling or the manufacture of ersatz-foodstuffs. Those Jews who are engaged at forced labor receive the absolute minimum of food—barely enough to enable them to continue at their work. Under these conditions, the Jews in forced labor are doomed to die of starvation or enervation within four or five months.

"From time to time, the Germans distribute special rations of certain foods. Thus for instance, in September 1942, rations of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a kilo of sugar were handed out. That day, the Nazi Commandant of Warsaw, in a special broadcast, announced that the Polish and Jewish people had expressed their gratitude to the German Army for its generous gift. These are methods employed by the Germans as soothing pap for the population and as landmarks to point back to after renewed massacre. The German soldiery blinks at smuggling into the ghettos—and later, manage to confiscate the food thus brought in, for their own use. However, any Jew actually caught in the act of smuggling valuables or food supplies is summarily shot on the spot.

"It is the object of the Germans to destroy the Polish nation, to annihilate its intelligentsia. The "little people"—laborers and middle lower classes—are not molested. The Germans hope to use these people for their own ends.

"But as for the Jews, the Germans are determined to wipe them out—as a nation and as individuals. Their intention is to exterminate them systematically, as a race, without any exceptions made. The massacres of Jews now being conducted are unprecedented in history. This is sheer mass-murder.

"The ghettos of Lodz, Warsaw and Lublin were established in 1940. At first, especially in the smaller towns, residence in the ghettos was not compulsory for the Jews. They were still permitted certain freedom of movement and were even allowed to live outside of the ghetto regions. Until 1941, in the cities annexed by the Reich, Jews were still comparatively unmolested. Early in 1941, the Germans declared residence in the ghettos compulsory for Jews and began a round-up of Jews in the villages. Toward the end of June of that year, after the outbreak of the Russo-German war, the Nazis began to look upon all Jews who lived in the Russian occupied part of Poland as Communists. A series of massacres began, commencing in the vicinity of Pinsk, Stanislawow and Wilno. It was not until September, 1941, that well-planned systematic massacres were organized beginning with the smaller and proceeding to the larger ghettos. There were cases where Germans had established ghettos, only to liquidate them soon thereafter. Thousands of Jews perished as a result of these pogroms, or from starvation and disease.

"By July 1942, when Himmler visited the Warsaw Ghetto, the Jews there only amounted to about 400,000. At a Nazi meeting, Himmler declared that:

1. Hitler had personally told him that the Jews had commenced the war and should, for that reason, be punished;
2. The Jews are the scum of the earth and must be converted to dust;
3. That all Jews must die, but not before going through suffering and agony.

Himmler's visit to Warsaw was the signal for a resurgence of massacres there. Between October 1942 and January 1943, more than 300,000 Jews were murdered in cold blood. By February, there were only 35,000 Jews left in the Warsaw Ghetto. I had witnessed some horrible scenes: Jewish corpses lying about in the streets, covered with newspapers. Relatives frequently carried their dead outside to avoid burial costs which were then covered by the Kehilla. In the gutters and on the sidewalks, one could see unconscious Jews, left there to breathe their last. Terrible hunger prevailed throughout the ghetto. Jews had to scabble in refuse heaps for a morsel to eat and were even reduced to sucking the juice from leaves and grass.

"The deportation of the Jews from Warsaw was carried out in the following fashion; with a systematic sadism, the Germans set a specific date

by which all Jews had to leave Warsaw for the East, for hard labor. The aged, the sick, the mentally ill and those incapable of physical labor were killed beforehand—the Germans cynically declaring that by this measure they were insuring larger food supplies for those who would remain. At the outset, those who were left behind were sufficiently benighted to believe that though the deportees would ultimately perish, *they* would be spared. At first, some 5,000 were deported daily; later the number was increased to 10,000. When the Nazis demanded of Czerniakow that he furnish them with a daily roster of 10,000 Jewish names, he committed suicide. After that, the Nazis raised the quota to 15,000 daily. Jews were deported according to the following categories and in the following order:

1. The aged, the sick and those too frail to work—provided they had not been previously murdered;
2. Those with indefinite sources of income (peddlers or persons supported by their families);
3. Those with trades which were non-essential for the German war effort (artisans, tailors, shoemakers and little store-keepers);
4. Those working in war factories, Jewish policemen, officers of the Jewish Community and employees of Hospitals and other institutions.

"The Jewish Community had perforce to agree to this vicious Nazi strategy, since they themselves were under constant threat of death and persecution. It was the duty of the Jewish Community to furnish the contingents for certain sections of the ghetto. Escaping Jews were frequently lassoed as they tried to climb over the ghetto walls in an effort to evade deportation. The deportation was conducted with German precision. The deportees were forced to march in files, like soldiers. The slightest disorder in the ranks led to the shooting of all the marchers in that line. The Jews were then marched off to freight-trains in which they were packed and sent off to the liquidation camps.

"In a death camp 12 kilometers outside of Belzec (Near Lublin) I myself witnessed the following horrible scenes: about 5,000 Jews had been brought there. About one-fourth of them were quartered in very primitive barracks, the rest had to remain outdoors under the open sky. They had been permitted to bring along with them 15 kilograms of baggage (food, clothing and valuables). The valuables were immediately taken from them by the Germans. They were forced to wait about 8 days, with no food or even water to drink. Some of those who had brought no food with them soon died of starvation. Even those who had brought along supplies were reluctant to share them with less fortunate ones, afraid to deprive their own children of food. There were no sanitation facilities what ever in the camp and the air constantly reeked with foul odor of human excrements. After a few days, I saw a number of naked Jewish corpses lying about in the fields. Relatives, friends or even total strangers had stripped the bodies of clothing. Women went mad, walking about tearing their hair out. I saw an old Jew, naked,

sitting in petrified silence. Nobody paid any attention to him. After eight days, the Jews were led to a long passageway, built of wood and wire-lathes, and directed them into waiting freight trains. They had to pass through a gauntlet of Gestapo men who shot at anyone who lagged behind. Several Gestapo men stood at the doors of the freight-cars to watch that none of the Jews touched the walls of the passage. If they did they were shot at once. Each of these freight-cars is ordinarily intended to accommodate either 8 horses or forty persons. But the Jews were driven in tightly packed ranks and as many as 120-140 people were pushed into one car, although the utmost capacity could not possibly have been for more than 100 people. The last car was filled first. When it was filled to the bursting limit, the next group (for the car ahead) were literally forced to clamber over the heads of the Jews in the previous car to reach their own. There were some 50 or 60 of these cars. About 300 Jews were shot or choked to death then and there. The floors of the car had been covered with a layer of quick-lime and chloride. As the packed mass of humanity performed its normal physical needs, the lime and chloride reacted chemically and the fumes which rose from the floor ultimately asphyxiated the Jews. In this way, the Germans rapidly "liquidated" the 6,000 Jews whom they had deported from the Warsaw Ghetto. Dante's *Inferno* is as nothing to the hell which prevailed there. The cars reechoed with shrieks and wild cries. This lasted about 8 hours. The trains were despatched to some point "North"—where, I do not know. After a journey of several days, the cars were shunted off somewhere in a field and eventually their human freight perished. I have heard that the Germans utilized those bodies for the manufacture of fertilizer.

"1,800,000 Jews have perished in Poland at the hands of the Nazis—1,500,000 bloodily massacred and 300,000 due to sickness and starvation.

"There are about 500,000 Polish Jews in Russia. A number of them have managed to escape abroad. More than 500,000 Jews have been deported to Poland from other European countries. In February, 1943, scattered over 55 towns and villages, there were still close to 2,000,000 Jews in Poland.

"The Poles are beginning to fear that now the Nazis will get around to them—though it must be said that they are not murdered outright by the Nazis as are the Jews.

"The Hitler youth is constantly armed and, if they choose, can simply go into the ghettos and shoot Jews to their hearts' content—coldbloodedly, without interference from anyone and without being called to account. Drunken Gestapo men make sorties into the ghettos, shooting wildly at windows, bringing down many a victim in this way."

MASS-MURDER OF JEWS IN IZABELIN, NEAR WARSAW

Report by a young Pole who escaped to London in the early part of 1943.
(From the *News Bulletin* of the Representation of Polish Jewry, Sept., 1943.)

"About 1,000 Jews were serving in forced labor in the soft coal works in Izabelin near Warsaw. I saw these Jews at work for ten days. The work is impossibly hard, especially when cold weather sets in. Living conditions are dangerous. Jews are packed in the barracks without window-panes, without the most elementary sanitary conveniences. The barracks are not heated. The rations allow only for starvation existence. It is impossible to eat the watery soup which the Germans serve once a day. Many took sick eating the soup. After a few weeks of such labor, the Jewish worker becomes useless and inefficient. There remains only a creature incapable of working or thinking. The Germans singled out 205 Jews, who had thus become incapable of working and therefore useless, and shot them. The Germans brought new Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to replace these. The treatment meted out by the Germans defies any imagination or understanding. This is more than murder—it is mass bestiality. I spoke to my friends who lived through the German murderous sadism against the Jews and we have come to the conclusion that the murder of the Jews is not in itself a goal for the Germans, the Germans aim at training a large personnel of hangmen who will be able to murder millions of people. The Germans reason that the world will not believe the cries of Polish Jewry, because human beings cannot believe that men are capable of such sadism. But we must protest until the people of the world will decide to undertake radical measures to stop the mass murder of Jews and Poles."

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